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*Davis, Edward Gorton*

LANDSCAPE PLANNING  
FOR SMALL HOMES

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E. GORTON DAVIS

Department of Landscape Architecture  
College of Architecture, Cornell University

LANDSCAPE  
ARCHITECTURE

GIFT



## CHAPTER I

### WHAT IS LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE?

When a group of persons see parks being graded and planted, or a neighbor's yard being laid out, one will say that it is "landscape gardening," another calls it "landscape architecture," and still another remarks that it is "fine gardening." Is it possible that any one of these terms means the same to all three persons, or to others? A florist may think of landscape gardening in terms of "bedding-out" plants and of round or square beds cut out of the lawn. A gardener or horticulturist may have visions of hardy-perennial flower borders. An architect perhaps looks for terraces, balustrades, and formal gardens, and if these be wanting he feels but little concerned. Others may expect ample lawns scattered over with fine trees and shrubs.

If the man who is laying out the park is asked what he calls himself, he may say he is a gardener, or a florist, or a contractor; or it may be that he styles himself a landscape gardener or a garden architect. However, this will depend upon circumstances. He may be a very successful man in a small territory, as in a suburb of a large city, or even in several adjoining cities. Perhaps he has adopted the title of the man from whom he learned the rudiments of his profession, or from the custom of the school at which he prepared himself. But whatever the circumstances with respect to any individual among the multitude claiming to be of this profession, one finds little uniformity in the kind of work they do, in the scope of their activities, in the name by which they designate their profession, in their point of view, and in their training and preparation. Is it to be wondered, then, that the public looks on with some skepticism and with a tendency to underrate the profession?

To return to the scene of the neighboring yard which is being laid out—to the crowd that gathers on the sidewalk to watch the work going on inside the fence. To most of these this landscape gardener or landscape architect is merely the man who "plants bushes." Some have noticed that he also makes roads and walks, but to the crowd this seems unlikely. Others say that he has trees and shrubs for sale. But some one ventures the remark that his bushes are procured from a nursery, and the same individual is also quite certain that this man, whose function is so much in question, only makes plans and looks after the work. Another onlooker remembers that a large place nearby had been laid out a few years ago, and that there a great number of workmen had been employed all summer. There had been a boss who hired the local contractors to do the grading, the road-building, and to lay the drains. Near the house had been constructed a formal garden with walls, steps, flowers, and a pool of water. Carpenters had built a fine fence all about the place, and, finally, quantities of trees and shrubs had been planted everywhere about the grounds. Some remembered that periodically a well-dressed man from a distant city had made visits, and had been seen talking with the boss and with the owner of the place. But what was the use of all this expense, when one could get ideas from the magazines and hire a local man to do the work?

There is always a curious crowd, and of course its speculations are not always a true indication of public opinion. However, a far more intelligent point of view on the part of the public is much to be desired regarding landscape architecture—what it is, and what it may do for every home owner. The public is more than curious. It is genuinely interested! Most home owners, regardless of station or income, desire to make their surroundings more attractive, and most of them actually attempt it, although perhaps not with very great success. However, of those who desire attractive yards, how many realize that at the same time their yards may be made more useful and more convenient?

This general interest has grown to such proportions that the nurserymen have for some time been pressed, by those buying plants, to give advice for their arrangement and planting. In many cases there is no one else at hand to furnish such advice. Some nurseries have tried to sidestep this question, others have refused to give any suggestions, and others, seeing therein an opportunity to increase their sales, have established landscape departments, with or without charge, according to what has seemed most feasible. Some landscape architects complain that the nurseries should not undertake landscape work. But most professional landscape architects do not want, and many will not even accept, what is termed "small business," as they say it does not pay. So here is a demand for a much-needed service, with no competition, and with little interest shown by those best able to supply the need.

To the nurseryman and the florist, the requests of their patrons for advice in planning and planting appears as an obstacle to their sales. The gardener accordingly takes down his florist sign and puts up one which reads "landscape gardener." He has observed the work on large places in his vicinity, and keeps an open eye for ideas. As small jobs are abundant, he finds plenty of practice, and with this comes confidence. Similarly, the nurseryman receives calls from nearby residents who say they would like some shrubs, if men can be sent from the nursery to plant them. As he is a business man, he meets the demand—he adapts himself and his organization to public demands. To do this adequately, he must find someone capable of taking the responsibility of giving advice and of directing planting operations. Of course he must make this new man pay, possibly by increasing the charges for his stock, by charging an extra fee for his services, or by materially augmenting his nursery sales. The new man must in some way earn his salary. Moreover, he himself wishes to make good, and so goes after business, and also after larger work on larger residences. Eventually he reaches out for the big estates which the landscape architect has hitherto considered his legitimate and exclusive field of activity.

It cannot be expected that the man whose main interest, training, and experience is that of growing and selling plants will also understand the theory of their design, and the arrangement of plants is but a part of the whole operation of planning, or, to speak more technically, of "designing." Designing includes not only the arrangement of plants, but of all objects and areas within a property. The man of ideals, the artist trained in design and especially in landscape design, should best know how to deal with the practical as well as with the artistic possibilities of any piece of land, park, or residence, as these fall within the scope of design. The work of the landscape architect requires a special genius, training, and experience, just as does that of the nurseryman or of any other business or



profession. But if the artist will not accept little jobs, where can persons of moderate means obtain the best advice?

In general business there is to be seen a parallel to this situation. There are many kinds of stores, some making sales of large values, and others of smaller values but in greater volume. Business men have found a way of making satisfactory profits not only from large sales but also from a great volume of small sales. Perhaps it is not reasonable to draw a parallel between general business and the practice of an artist's profession. It is to be hoped, however, that in a measure this comparison is possible, and that it will succeed in interesting designers in the small-residence problems and in their possibilities. Indeed, those who may undertake to deal with the thousands of small-residence jobs will very likely discover that a business of great volume awaits them.

But why, in the past, have landscape architects failed to handle small jobs with profit? It would be a difficult and tedious task to make a searching inquiry into the small-job experiences of those men who are today the representative landscape architects; nor could a single person speak for them all. Until comparatively recent times, no one wanted their services except a few persons owning expensive homes and whose opportunities in life had shown them, at home and abroad, the possibilities of beautiful artificial gardens or of parklike scenery. Travel, especially in Europe, has always been limited to those of means, and not all of those who see and know about fine gardens become sufficiently interested in them to want them. Persons who wanted fine gardens and could afford them, until quite recently, were few and far between. To reach these individuals, the landscape architect was subject to heavy expense in travel and to considerable loss of time. In preparation for his profession, a long period of study and varied experience at home and abroad had been necessary. Furthermore, as a business venture the profession was a precarious one, promising at best no immediate success, and requiring a number of years for the establishment of business on a paying basis. In the past, only a man of means and of great interest in his chosen profession could afford to become a landscape architect; and it is evident that he would necessarily have to charge a considerable amount for his time, whatever his services.

In recent years, the employment of either a landscape architect or a local gardener to do the grading and planting about new buildings has become the common practice. The work is not all good, but the plants are pretty! The thousands of families that are constantly filling up new subdivisions in all the cities see other "pretty" front yards or larger estates, and desire to follow suit. Here is the new demand for landscape advice—from the small-home owners. Is this demand for really good advice, or is the call merely for the untrained opinion of the local gardener or of the nursery-plantsman? Among the owners of small homes, as well as among the wealthy, there are many persons having comparatively little feeling for art. They have not had time to develop such an appreciation. Most persons like good landscape work when they see it, but they may not so understand and appreciate it as to be able to distinguish the good from the poor. No appreciable difference may be noticed by the layman between the work of the skilled designer and that of the man trained only as a gardener, especially if the examples of both types of work are not sufficiently near each other to make the contrast indisputably evident to even the uninitiated. The idea that the

gardener can give more attention to the practical details of planting appeals. Also, the charges of the local gardener are more consistent with the reasonable expenditures for work about the small home.

Persons of somewhat broader experience and who perhaps have seen good landscape work, say they "want the best advice," and they engage some recognized landscape architect. Not unlike Americans of all classes, they spend a little more on their house and its furnishings than they had originally planned, and as the whole business approaches completion it becomes necessary to lessen expenses in every possible way. They want all the attractive features proposed by the landscape architect; but as the work progresses, due either to under-estimating on the part of the landscape architect or to their own over-estimating of their resources, curtailment of the work becomes necessary. In the eyes of the architect, his work, thus terminated, is unsuccessful.

In other instances of small residences done by landscape architects, the cost of maintaining them, after all is finished, has proved to be too great a financial burden. If landscape work is neglected for want of means or for want of skilled gardeners, especially while such work is new and immature, it is natural for the landscape architect to be disappointed; and surely such examples of his work do him no credit. It is safe to say, furthermore, that most landscape architects have found that it is more difficult to procure good gardeners for small places than for large ones.

In other cases in which the landscape architect has been engaged for such small jobs, there have arisen difficulties over professional charges, which, to the small-home owner, seem unreasonably large, especially when, toward the end of things, circumstances become somewhat colored by his worry over his bills. Yet the landscape architect may not have charged so much for these small plans as for larger ones, although his visits took just as much time as did those for his larger jobs, and although most likely he had already made considerate reductions from his customary charges. In the past he had met with clients of ample means who did not appreciate his work, and with others who required a great deal of redrawing of their plans. Even some of his larger and most successful jobs had deteriorated for want of good gardening. But in the case of these large jobs he had at least been well paid for his services. Thus it has come about that, all things considered, the landscape architect is likely to regard the little job as only "much ado about nothing."

There are examples of small homes well done, but they are few and far between. Unfortunately, not homes of the same size and cost, but rather the larger and more elaborate residences are selected as models for the smaller ones. And if these larger "landscaped" homes are flashy with yellow-, blue-, and purple-foliage plants and resplendent with evergreens, it is these which are more likely to be used as models for some poor little front yard, resulting in a very much overdressed effect. Small homes are new problems to most landscape architects; likewise, the landscape architect is still somewhat of a stranger to the suburbanite and the commuter.

After all, how many persons understand the advantages of good landscape planning? It is much to be feared that, to the average home builder, "landscaping" is but a part of the beautifying of his home; hence to him it is still but a luxury. But nothing is too good for him, and the only questions are "how much



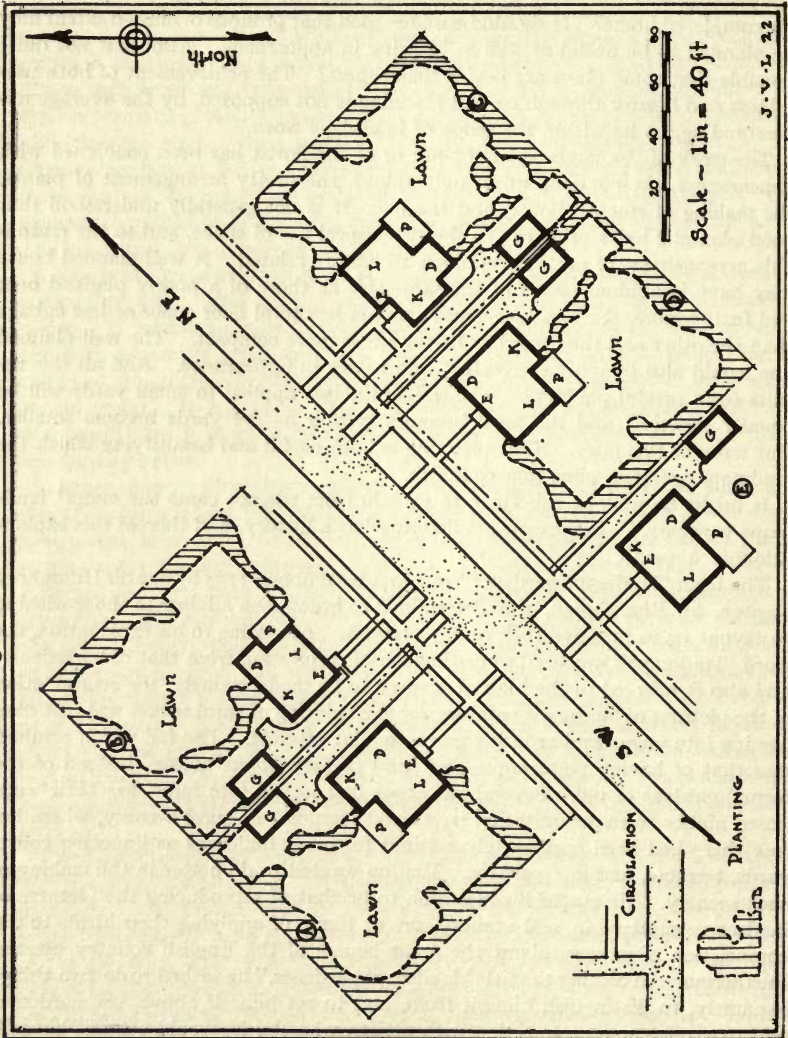
will it cost?" and, "how far can I afford to go with it?" This attitude, as well as the misunderstanding which causes it, is probably general. Does the average person have any idea that these developments, this landscape planning, may have any practical bearing upon the usefulness, the convenience, or the value of his completed home? It should be understood that grounds of limited extent may be planned to be useful as well as pleasing in appearance. Also, is it not quite possible that some plans are better than others? The achievement of both usefulness and beauty through careful planning is not supposed, by the average understanding, to lie within the scope of landscape work.

The work of the landscape gardener or of the florist has been concerned with appearances, the covering up of ugly things, the pretty arrangement of plants, the making of smooth lawns, and the like. It is not generally understood that good planning looks primarily to the economical use of space, and to the reasonable arrangement of parts and objects which are related. A well-planned house may have individual rooms of the same size as those of a poorly planned one; and furthermore, the first house may contain less total floor space or less cubage than the other and thus cost less because it is more compact. The well-planned one would also be more convenient and better in appearance. And all this results from careful planning. The same principle applied to small yards will be equally effective, and the need becomes greater as the yards become smaller. But more of this later. That planning is both useful and beautifying which the landscape architect aims to accomplish.

It might be well, at this time, to explain from whence came the name "landscape gardener." Landscape architecture has a history, and thereof this explanation is a part.

The term "landscape gardener" was first used about 1785 by one Sir Humphrey Repton, an Englishman, who determined to become an advisor to those wishing to layout or to improve their country estates. According to his explanation, the word "landscape" was used to distinguish his profession from that of a gardener, and also it referred to the kind of scenery to be made, namely, the reproduction of the pictures of landscape painters, for the painting of rural scenes was just then coming into vogue and arousing great popular interest. The fad which resulted was that of having picturesque and rural scenery about houses, instead of the formal gardens of old. Several gardeners had leaped into fame for their supposed ability to make imitation rivers and picturesque, rural scenery, where before there had been such stately settings for great buildings as imposing courtyards, terraces, and fine gardens. Repton wanted to do better in the making of such scenery. He stated his intention to be that of reproducing the pictures of landscape painters in real scenery, or, at least, of applying their ideals to the composition of scenery about the great houses of the English country estates. Furthermore, in coining the title "landscape gardener," he wished to do two things—namely, to distinguish himself from, and to set himself above, the gardener, and to express some connection with artists, whereby he would commit himself, in his work, to the study of their landscape pictures and the principles that governed their compositions. This was his explanation of the term as he used it, and under this title he practiced his profession.

Repton was a man of good education and of some means. His father was a merchant, and this vocation the son likewise was expected to follow. He lived on





the small rural estate left him by his father, and perhaps it was while living there that he developed his interest in rural scenery. However, mercantile business failing, to quote from a biographical note:

The possibility of turning to advantage that natural taste for improving the beauties of scenery, which had formed one of the dearest pleasures of his rural life, suggested itself to his mind one night when anxiety had driven sleep from his pillow. The scheme which at first seems to have entered his mind with almost the vague uncertainty of a dream, assumed a more substantial form, when, with the return of day, he meditated upon its practicability. With his usual quickness of decision . . . he spent the whole of that day in writing to his various acquaintances . . . explaining his intention of becoming a "landscape gardener," and he lost not a moment in bending his whole mind to the acquisition of such technical knowledge as he thought necessary for the practical purposes of such a profession.

Previous to the time of Repton, in fact for nearly a quarter of a century before his birth, there had existed in England an almost universal predilection for naturalistic scenery in the place of formal gardens; and in many cases, gardens hundreds of years old, surrounding equally old houses, had been destroyed to make way for this picturesque scenery. Today it is recognized that this was a mistake and a misfortune, in spite of the fact that some of the estates thus "improved" did not even date back to the time of King Charles II (1668), and were not nearly so good as those of the Tudor times (1500-1600). Advocates of this "new style," however, were not discriminating: all that was condemned as "formal" was swept away to be replaced by the picturesque—a style of equal artificiality had they but stopped to realize it.

Repton took the stand that, adjoining the houses, some conventionality was desirable, and that not all should be "landscaped." For that day and time, this was a wholly commendable stand for a man in his position to assume; but apparently he did not live up to it. Yet remembering that he was trained to be a merchant rather than a designer, it is not surprising that he was somewhat influenced by the taste, or want of taste, of his day. He was in fact, an able man, whereas the other advocates of the natural style, who had preceded him, were mostly mere adventurers and opportunists taking advantage of a passing fad. And for a certainty, Repton took his title most seriously. The following is a quotation from his answer to a letter in which he was criticized for assuming so ambitious a title:

But, while you are pleased to allow me some of the qualities necessary to my profession, you suppose me deficient in others, and therefore strongly recommend the study of "what the higher artists have done, both in their pictures and drawings" a branch of knowledge which I have always considered to be not less essential to my profession than hydraulics or surveying, and without which I should never have presumed to arrogate to myself the title of "landscape gardener," which, you observe, is "a title of no mean pretention."

While Repton was not so wholly absorbed in the ideals of the picturesque as were most of his predecessors and contemporaries, most of his work, nevertheless, dealt almost exclusively with the picturesque landscape of English private parks, or, as we would call them, pastures. This type of artificial scenery may be seen today in our large city parks, in our golf links, and in the meadows of our large country estates; and it is appropriately called "parklike." It is also known as "landscape" scenery, deriving this name from the same origin as does the term "landscape gardening."

Landscape gardening continued to prevail as the designation both of this particular style and of the profession, until Mr. Frederick Law Olmsted (who died in

Boston in 1890) assumed the title "landscape architect." It should be understood that, both in its inception and in its application, the term "landscape gardening" referred primarily to planting and grading operations, and also that it implied the use of but one style for all situations—namely, the parklike. Thus it would seem that persons still adhering to this title should, to be consistent, practice Mr. Repton's theories—theories very good in some ways but very limited and, in some respects, unquestionably wrong. Today the work of the landscape architect includes the planning of parks, of subdivisions, of park systems, and, occasionally, even of entire cities. Furthermore, the planning of residences may involve architectural settings appropriate for city homes, as well as those suitable for both simple and architecturally elaborate country estates. In such a variety of work, in order to suit all situations it is necessary to deal in both formal gardens and parklike scenery. Further, in planning and in executing designs for park systems, parks, gardens, and the like, one finds himself confronted by problems of engineering, economics, agriculture, building construction, and, last and most important, design.

Hence it would seem that the expression "landscape gardening," as a general name for the profession or its work, is entitled to no status today, and, in fact, most persons so styling themselves are but gardeners and florists. With these distinctions made clear, perhaps a definite statement of the aims and scope of the profession will now be more readily understood.

*Landscape architecture aims. first, to produce an economic arrangement of the objects and parts of a property, or unit of land; and, second, to attain beauty in the kind of scenery that is suitable to any particular property.* These aims are developed, not in sequence, but simultaneously in the design. For the amateur it may be best to think of planning in this way — as a dual function.

Then it is the aim of the landscape architect to plan both for convenience and for attractiveness of setting. For a certainty, a convenient and compact arrangement is also the most easily decorated. In fact it is surprising how well a group of buildings look which have been given an orderly disposition; or how well a new residence appears when the house is suitably placed, the walks and roads are laid to a good line, and the ground is well-graded; and this is noticeable even before any planting has been done or any mature or settled condition has been attained. The orderly arrangement, though bare of decoration, is attractive in itself.

But some persons will attempt the improvement of a residence without any previous thought for the plan as a whole. They imagine that merely by planting trees and shrubs, or by laying out flower beds, or by making a garden, this is possible. In such cases the result proves not very successful, and usually more planting is resorted to, with the mistaken idea that success in the result depends only on the amount of material planted and on its cost. A disorderly plan is bad enough; but an excess of planting further clutters a yard and adds to the appearance of confusion. The importance of starting with a good plan would be appreciated by such persons if they could but see how well even a half-finished example of landscape work looks, even while there is evident only the skeleton of its ultimate arrangement. The effect is pleasing at this stage of its progress because it is apparently orderly and compact, and because each part is coordinated with other related parts. It looks useful and yet has style also. An awkward



plan may at times be improved by decoration, if its defects are thereby somewhat hidden; but this solution does not make it more convenient, and the result is seldom interesting in appearance. Careful planning is not only necessary for convenience, but its contribution is essential to the achievement of the beauty desired.

In a collection of articles on the early history of landscape architecture, written some twenty-five years ago appeared the following definition; and though these articles dealt largely with the extensive parks and gardens surrounding royal palaces, the fundamental principles expressed therein are sound:

The art of gardening means the art of arranging surfaces of land and water, with all the forms of vegetation they support and all such works of architecture or sculpture as may be thought desirable, according to some settled design or scheme. Its productions may vary in character between the most formal and the most natural looking effects; and in size between the smallest bit of verdurous ground in a city street and the widest rural park. But they may always be distinguished by the fact that organized beauty has been sought in their creation. Horticulture aims at the development of beautiful individual plants. Economic gardening, like the sister craft of agriculture, so disposes of the surface of the ground and the individual plants that cultivation can most easily be pursued; but when we speak of the art of gardening, we imply a result in which, though individual plants are valued and usefulness is largely served, a beautiful general effect has been the main concern.—*Mrs. Schuyler Van Renssalaer.*

While the point of view of twenty-five years ago is somewhat different from that of today, nevertheless this interesting definition presents the subject very clearly, and is wanting only in those very practical aspects which confront landscape architecture today in our very practical age.

The following quotation from the diary of Charles Eliot, written about the same time as Mrs. Van Renssalaer's article, defines landscape architecture as, "the art of arranging land and landscape for human use, convenience, and enjoyment." In a letter written in 1890 he says further: "The scope and breadth of my profession is not often recognized. As I understand it, all conscious arranging of visible things for man's convenience, and for man's delight, is architecture." Then he quotes from Morris: "A great subject, truly, for it embraces the consideration of the whole of the external surroundings of the life of man: we cannot escape from it if we would, for it means the moulding and the altering to human need the very face of the earth itself." Further on in his letter, Mr. Eliot continues:

This building of convenient and beautiful structures is thus but a part of architecture. The arranging of these structures in streets, in neighborhoods, on seacoasts, in the valleys of the hills, the careful adjustment of the structure to its site and its landscape, the devising of ways and roads so that they may either be impressive through order and formality, charming through their subordination to natural conditions, the development of appropriate beauty in the surroundings of buildings, whether by adding terraces and avenues or by enhancing natural beauty—all this is, or ought to be at least, one-half of the art and profession of architecture. This is the landscape architect's part; for the field is so wide that it can hardly be comprehended by one man, and two professions are necessary, each approaching and helping the other.

In another letter, written in 1896, to one whose article on the function of the landscape artist had confused landscape architecture with landscape gardening, Mr. Eliot wrote:

Landscape architecture includes and covers landscape engineering, landscape gardening, and landscape forestry. A formal avenue or parkway is a work of landscape architecture; so is a well-designed picturesque park. The engineer and the gardener will each have his share in both pieces of work; but each must labor for the perfecting of the general design, . . . . if a successful result is to be achieved.

There remains considerable evidence of good planning in the gardens of the ancients, although in many cases their works seemingly were intended only to embellish the surroundings of buildings. If we may judge from what little we know of them, the works of the Romans showed more evidence of planning than was apparent in the work of the earlier peoples; and this planning seemingly comprehended entire properties with all the structures and areas included therein. On the whole, aesthetic considerations seem to have prevailed. Landscape planning in Europe during the Renaissance varied considerably in the different countries, but the most typical examples invariably show practical considerations subordinated to artistic effects. Modern landscape architecture has recognized the value of efficiency in planning. It seeks economy in the use of space and topography, and convenience in the arrangement of related parts, as well as endeavoring always to obtain the most pleasing general effect.

Too much stress cannot be laid upon the importance of careful planning. When large properties are involved, such as country estates or farms, or such public grounds as parks, playgrounds, or groups of buildings, the value of good professional advice is more readily admitted, since the expenditure must necessarily be relatively great, and the cost of the mistakes which may thereby be obviated will offset the professional fee. In the development of small residences, or in the planning of groups of buildings with but little open ground about them, the need for careful planning is not at first so apparent, because the amount of ground is small. The need of a landscape architect's advice is by some persons thought to vary directly in proportion to the amount of land, or area, left after the buildings have been erected. One should recognize, however, that just the reverse is true. The possibilities may not be so great where the land areas are small; but, the requirements remaining constant, the problem of its arrangement and convenience becomes more perplexing and difficult as the size of the grounds decreases. Especially in restricted situations should the buildings and grounds be simultaneously planned, and that by one familiar with the particular needs, both within the buildings and without, of the future occupant. Economy in the use of the small space available is absolutely essential, and convenience is still required. The alleviation of all appearance of cramped conditions and the beauty of the whole, which must still be attained in spite of difficulties—these are problems for the landscape architect.

One has only to recall the almost universal disorderliness and unattractiveness of the settings of our public buildings, and also the shabby yards of most city homes, to realize both the neglect of, and, at the same time, the importance of the landscape problems involved in the planning of limited areas. To be well-planned is their greatest need; to so locate buildings as to permit reasonable disposition of the land; to plan walks and roads for convenience, grace of line, and the conservation of unbroken lawns; and to recognize where to use every foot of land sparingly and where to be generous with it—these are only a few of the questions which bear on the reasonable arrangement of properties.

Summarizing, then, landscape architecture is an art of design; and the principles of such design, intelligently applied, should lend valuable aid in the solution of problems of planning land areas, together with all the features they may include. Our home surroundings and city environments are no exception to the rule that beauty is generally wholesome and therefore necessary for our welfare and



happiness. This is exemplified in the general and growing desire for attractive home grounds. Practical planning, though necessarily the first consideration, may not be considered apart from the attainment of beauty, both being included in the purpose of landscape architecture and both being developed simultaneously in a design. A generally intelligent point of view of the subject on the part of everyone, both in home and in civic life, does for a certainty, seem desirable.

The first steps in the development of any property should look to its plan, and that plan should deal with the property in its entirety. Whether or not a yard is to be left largely in grass, the house and yard should be regarded as one, and planned as one. Either a lot should be selected suitable to a preconceived house, or a house should be designed to suit a particular lot, and of the two, the latter course is best.

A house should not be planned in the abstract and then built on any lot large enough to contain it, with perhaps more or less turf about it, much as a horse is pastured in any lot large enough to furnish him sufficient pasturage. Unfortunately, the attitude too frequently encountered is, "If the lot is too small or ill-suited, well, that is too bad, but it could not be helped!" There are no rules for proportions between the sizes of houses and of the lots on which they are built. Almost any proportion may be made practical and of attractive appearance if the whole is carefully planned out at the start, so that the result achieved will make those proportions seem to have been intentional.

Properties with small yards most of all require careful planning, just as do small houses, for there is no room to waste. In any home there are certain essential features, such as the main rooms of a house. Outside, likewise, there are similar necessary things which must be provided, as, rich or poor, we must live similarly in the main essentials, and differently only in our comforts and luxuries. In small yards these essentials must be provided for, and it is much to be desired that some comforts may also be included. But is it evident that the amplitude suitable for the indoor rooms and for the outdoor lawns and gardens of large homes is entirely incompatible with small properties. It is likewise evident for small residences that a variety of outdoor features similar to those seen on large estates is neither possible nor appropriate. The scale of the human being must limit all dimensions. For example, a door may be too small to get through, and a walk may be too narrow to be practical. When the dimensions of features in small yards are diminutive, the plan is impractical and the effect is merely petty. A diversity of features must also be avoided in small yards. They should be left as open as possible, with but few, and those only the necessary, subdivisions.

A discussion of the principles governing the planning of small residence properties must of necessity be subject to a considerable number of limitations. Especially must this be the case if these explanations are intended for the amateur. It is hardly necessary to say that planning may be done best only by one with true feeling for design. In any art, composition cannot be carried out by rule. Nevertheless, the writer is convinced that some fundamentals of good planning may be plainly expressed in words. In the last analysis, many principles in design are dependent upon the needs and limitations of human beings, upon their customs and their circumstances of environment. All design has emanated from us—from our point of view as human beings; it is indeed of us and for us. It is the

equation of the human being plus his environment. We vary according to our hereditary and in our individual inclinations; and our environment furthermore varies our opportunities. But there is much common ground, and much that is tangible and definable. It is hoped that at least in these physical and tangible aspects, design may be somewhat explained and defined.

For the sake of convenience in discussion, some classification of the various kinds of estates, according to their size and situation, will be arbitrarily made. Although one should realize that almost every property is in a class by itself and is therefore also a law unto itself, there is sufficient similarity in most of the narrow city lots, for example, to permit of their being regarded and discussed as a group. Another group would include those of wider frontage. A classification will therefore be made, as follows: first, narrow city lots with houses of like widths, solid blocks, semi-detached houses (double houses), and detached houses with some side-yard space but insufficient for a side-yard court or garden; second, average suburban lots with frontage two or three times that of the house front and therefore sufficient for some side-yard feature; third, country cottages, whose lots are apt to have a frontage greater than their depth; fourth, some type of farmstead.

A comparatively level area of ground will be assumed in order that the problem may be simple and the explanation not unnecessarily complicated. Fundamental principles of the arrangement clearly suitable for flat ground will, in a later chapter, be discussed in their relation to more varied topography. If, from the simple examples used at the beginning of this study, the underlying principles may be clearly understood, it may later be possible to adapt them and to vary them intelligently in the modelling of rough or irregular land.



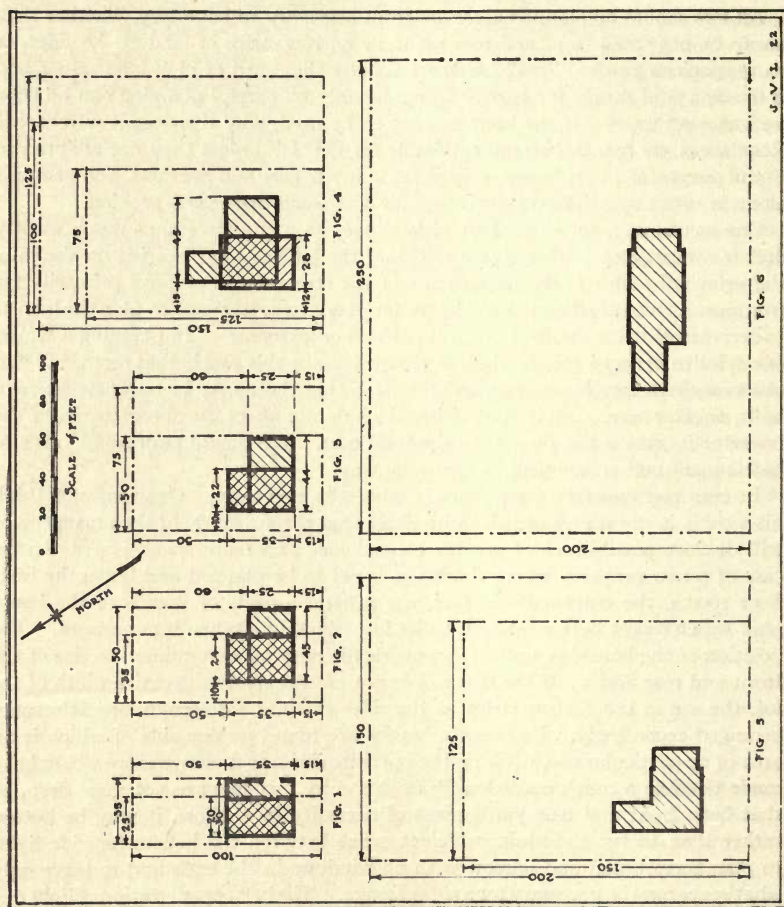
## CHAPTER II

### ARRANGEMENT OF NARROW LOTS

All lots should be planned carefully from boundary to boundary, whether they are to be but small front and rear areas, or narrow strips of land at the sides, or more spacious yards. Small yards are usually the result of high land values, and if one has paid dearly for narrow frontage, only by careful planning can he hope for value returned. If the land was not to be used, why then was it purchased? Rear areas are apt to become catch-alls for rubbish unless they are adapted to useful purposes. Use, however, is likely to invite care and neatness, and neatness alone is often a satisfactory solution for the small-back-yard problem.

One has to pay, for every foot of frontage, on many streets, as much as fifty dollars a front foot. Though the depth of the lot has some bearing on the rate, the principal factor is the importance of the street, and one pays primarily for frontage. Since one has to pay dearly for every foot, why not so plan the land as to derive from it the greatest possible use and enjoyment? In planning a house, one tries to arrange for the desired dimensions in this and in that room, but also observes great care in joining these rooms so that there may be no waste space in halls, angular areas, and irregularities which do not affect the apparent size of the house or its rooms but do add to the total cost. We should plan small yards to be compact and economical in the same way.

In cramped quarters good order is especially necessary. One may not think his yard is in disorder, but it is quite likely that careful study of the arrangement will disclose possibilities of greater convenience and more spaciousness. In the case of a new property where the house is yet to be planned and built, the first-floor rooms, the entrances—in fact, any general aspects or details of the house plan which might better relate it to its lot—should be taken into account. The position of the house, as well as its outside dimensions, determines the size of the front and rear areas. If the house does not extend across the entire width of the lot, the use of the narrow strips at the sides should be determined and the space arranged accordingly. Frequently houses are found on one side of which is an area of no particular use, while on the opposite side a foot or two more would have made possible a much-needed walk or driveway. If lots are not very deep, so that both front and rear yards must of necessity be shallow, it may be better, rather than to try to obtain sufficient space between the houses for side light, to plan them broad and narrow with no windows in the ends and to leave only what space may be necessary for a side passage. The better penetration of light due to the small front-and-back dimensions may result in the interiors of such houses being better lighted than those of houses so arranged as to depend for some light from partially darkened side windows. Of course, an architect may not have opportunity to thus mould the plan of the house, but forethought costs nothing, and, in many cases, saves much. Thus the first considerations should include a careful study of the plan of the house in relation to the lot, and its position thereon.





In the case of most narrow lots, the house practically cuts the lot in two, dividing it into front and back yards. Where the building line is not fixed by restrictions in the sale contract, one is free to place his house as near or as far back from the street as he chooses. The depths of the front and back yards will, of course, depend upon the position of the house. What considerations determine, or should determine, the distance of the house front from the street line and the amount of space necessary in the back yard?

The building line should be fixed when the character of a street or a neighborhood is determined; but in the past this decision has ordinarily been left to the discretion of those who built the first houses. This haphazard procedure is especially serious if the houses are very close together or if they join. However one might wish to place his house, he finds himself limited, to a considerable extent, by this established building line. In the earlier days of this country, it was the custom to place houses immediately on the sidewalk line, thus saving all the land possible for a garden in the rear. This practice was followed even with detached houses. During the past fifty years, the garden in the rear has given way to the spacious front lawn and the front porch affording a grandstand seat from which to observe all the excitement of the street. The latest tendency, however, seems to be a reversion toward the old idea of spacious back yards, or at least toward a more reasonable adjustment of space, and toward more severe house fronts. One cannot vary an established building line without detriment to the appearance of the block and possible injury to his neighbor's house as well as his own. Therefore it is unwise to buy on badly planned streets; and in new developments the purchaser should insist upon proper restrictions for the street. But how far back should this building line be located?

The attractive appearance of one or of all house fronts on any street must depend upon a well-conceived street plan. The "front scene" is not that of a single yard, but of many, and includes also a part of the street itself. Therefore the street, in its width, kind of pavement, width of parkings, and disposal and kind of trees, should be considered together with the depths of the lawns, and the even size and harmonious character of the house fronts. All this should be combined into one study, in order that all parts and elements may be planned in good proportion and in fitting character. Deep lawns will not improve a street unless possibly the street is very wide and the adjoining yards and houses are likewise ample. The unnecessarily deep lawn only makes a narrow street seem narrower by comparison, and will also dwarf a small house front and accentuate the narrowness of a lot.

What, then, is the determining factor in the question of the amount of space needed for the front yard? What is to be the function of the yard? It cannot be that of a garden, as there is no privacy; nor can it be given over to any specific use, as in most cases front yards are not enclosed. Its purpose is merely that of an entrance feature and an appropriate foreground for the house. The question then becomes, How much land is necessary to make the house look well?

Usually the building line should be in from the sidewalk a distance of from one-half to two-thirds of the lot widths. If there is any suggestion of lot boundaries between the lawns, such a building line makes every lot appear wider, as the widths of all front yards will be their greatest dimension. And after all, but little space is required in a front yard, since only a walk, good turf, and few very trim shrubs or evergreens are necessary. There is little opportunity

for ample lawns or landscape planting where the frontage is but thirty or forty feet. Save the gardenlike features for the garden in the rear.

These front-yard grass plots look best with the simplest treatments; walks to one side rather than in the center (except for houses with symmetrical fronts and center doors) and always straight; good grass; and very little, but very good, planting—in brief, simple, straightforward treatment to the extent of severity makes for the best appearance of the street and also for the best foreground for a house. Shrubs should be used most carefully, and selected not alone for their flowers or for one's fondness for particular varieties, but for their fitness in the whole picture of the house front. Individual shrubs whose form or appearance, all the year around, may give emphasis to the entrance or soften the angles of the house corner or porch are acceptable; and of these two or three, or possibly more when closely grouped so as to have the effect of single plants, will be an abundance. The less shrubbery one can use with satisfactory effect, the better will be the result. There should be nothing displeasing in the appearance of the masonry foundations of buildings; and in fact the so-called "foundation planting" or "base planting," which produces the absurd effect of their standing upon bushes, is in no sense desirable and only detracts from their appearance of stability. It is true that many houses have been built too high above the ground, and concealment of this awkwardness is attempted by means of continuous planting. But one evil seldom cures another. If the grade line is too low, raise it. One should rely upon vegetation merely to soften, to give the appearance of a little age, and to add a touch of decoration. Too much planting clutters a small yard. An area given over largely to planting looks like a garden, and the place for a garden is not in the small front yard of a city lot. The front yard as a whole should be planned as an appropriate foreground for the house front, which it should set off without attracting the main interest to itself. Simple treatments are therefore best.

Houses directly on the sidewalk, with the "stoop" and high flight of steps which afford a good basement entrance, are not within the scope of this discussion. With any appreciable turf area, it is best to avoid high flights of steps ascending directly to the front door. Steps at the sidewalk, or several flights as one approaches, are a better arrangement. While as a rule low doorsteps and at least the effect of a low first-floor elevation look best, yet, unless grades are comparatively flat in these small front lawns, it is impossible to make even the merest suggestion of a rule for their treatment. When a house is planned, that line of grade across the front should be determined which is good and proper in relation to the design of its front. Then, if there is space for plants, which should likewise be considered when the front is being designed, these will not have to serve as curtains, but rather will they be a part of the design.

Usually the most important plants in the front yard are those on either side of the front door. At times these are all that will be needed. Needless to say, they should be carefully selected with a view to being as refined as possible and of a kind which will thrive and look well all the year round. Also should it be remembered that these plants are intended as a decoration for the front door. Avoid extremes in color and other distracting objects and, so far as possible, choose plants of dark, rich, green foliage and rounded forms, rather than those of conspicuous or striking appearance. In city situations, gaudy colors and



variegated effects are not as pleasing as somber greens and occasional white flowers. The flowers of course, are always transient, and the foliage and the winter effect are therefore of prime importance. Unfortunately, few evergreens will stand street dust and the abuse incident to exposed situations, whether that of persons or of weather. But, evergreen or deciduous, front-yard plants should always be adapted to their situation, as sickly or damaged plants are by no means decorative.

On some properties, hedges or small groups of shrubs look well on the side boundary, extending from the building line part way to the sidewalk. Preferably such planting in front yards should be uniform with that in all the yards on the street. Also one must be sure to maintain such planting in good condition. Hedges or other fences, if in character, and if in accordance with the custom of the street, may add considerably to the appearance of the fronts. In old cities and villages, "door-yards," as they were called, were always enclosed by walls, hedges, or fences. Whatever their size, the yards appeared larger when somewhat enclosed, and also, being enclosed, they could be used. Any enclosed area seems larger because it is not then merely a part of a larger expanse by comparison with which it appears diminished. In illustration of this, doubtless everyone has looked into the cellar of some new house and commented on how small that house would be, but when he later entered the house as it approached completion, was surprised to find it much larger than he had expected. When the cellar was just a hole in a larger lot, it appeared small by comparison; but when one had gone into the house and could judge its size only by his recollection of other houses, then it was possible to form a fair opinion as to its size. It is well to enclose front yards in situations where this has become the custom. However, hedges are with difficulty maintained if too near a sidewalk or if, for any reason, they receive much wear. A hedge inside an inconspicuous fence usually does better. But walls and fences with attractive gates, if well done, are always both practical and decorative.

Care should be taken to select only such plants as, whatever their position in the front yard, may easily be kept within the desired size by trimming, or such as do not of their own habit grow beyond bounds. It is by no means uncommon to see shrubs or small trees spreading over a large part of a front yard or growing so tall as to cover up the windows. If these are carelessly cut back, they become ragged. If flowering shrubs are sheared, they look equally bad without most of their flowering wood and with but a weak and scattered flower crop. Again, it is neither good gardening nor good sense to make pretty little groups with small evergreens, which, as they mature, become forest trees. Most of these evergreens soon grow beyond the desired size and become sickly when restrained with shears. It is not difficult to obtain the necessary information about plants before they are selected.

Vines may well be included in the planting scheme for a house front. Their habits vary, however, and one should decide whether the whole front, or only a part of it, is to be covered; whether there should be an even and clinging sheet of foliage, or a loosely draped curtain, or a mass of vine growth for a roof corner; in brief, one must know exactly what particular effect that can be produced by vines is desirable. Some vines, such as the wistarias climbing up a house corner, have sufficient foliage, not only at the ground but all the way up, to satisfactorily

dress the corner and thus obviate the necessity of a group of shrubs. Some vines will climb very high; but all have very definite limits in this respect. Vines for fronts, like other plants, should be selected mainly for their foliage. Occasionally more simple and unpretentious houses take kindly to a flowering vine over the door.

Too great a variety of vegetation produces a spotty rather than a harmonious entire effect. In planning the front yard, it is with regard to the whole picture of the house as seen from the street that one should be concerned. Don't mistake the front yard for the garden! If in doubt as to how many kinds of bushes to use, use but one kind, relying upon the natural variation in both the habit and the color value of shrubs of the same species. Dress your front yard on principles of simplicity.

Thus, considering the function of the front yard to be mainly that of furnishing a proper setting for the house front, one might conclude that no more space should be allowed than will suffice for a shallow lawn, especially in view of the fact that a deeper lawn may make the narrow lot appear even narrower than it is. There should be, however, some recognition of the building line and other prevailing customs of the street. On the same street, strikingly different schemes, though in themselves attractive and meritorious, do not look well. After all, clever manipulation of simple features and styles requires considerable skill on the part of the planner, and in the end the "landscaping" of small front yards is more a matter of taste and judgment than of expenditure and effort.

Plans for back yards should be started with a full realization of the fact that a limited space cannot be made to accommodate features appropriate only for a larger area. A city back yard cannot be made a half-acre suburban garden in miniature. Starting with a simple plan, the next care should be to have all details serviceable and adapted to the situation. Walks should not be narrow to the extent of appearing insignificant; where grass will not grow, a suitable pavement is better; and plants that do not thrive should be omitted, as a healthy weed is more beautiful than a sickly flower. The situation is not an easy one with which to cope, but, nevertheless, the back-yard garden must look successful in order to look beautiful, and this is entirely possible, though only by means of a common-sense plan.

The improvement of the back yard begins with the fence. Apparently there has never been any question of the need of fencing back yards. The American substitute for the old-world wall was a step backward. Wooden fences, especially of the high, tight-board variety, are never handsome, now-a-days not even cheap; they are usually out of repair, easily climbable, and, in the long run, most expensive. Where a solid barrier is desirable, a light masonry wall of some kind proves, in the end, the most economical, and, furthermore, it is the best looking. Vines growing on these walls need never be disturbed. It is easily possible to perforate such walls to permit better circulation of air. The wrought-iron fence is always a possibility and may look well if of very simple, straightforward design. The fence of heavy woven wire is the cheapest substitute for a permanent and substantial fence. This must be very carefully hung to look well, and of a small mesh if it is to prevent climbing. But with a heavy growth of vines upon it, such a fence becomes practically a solid barrier though still permitting a free circulation of air, and this, in very small areas, is an important factor, not only



for comfort but also for success with most plants. Height in any barrier is certainly essential for some degree of privacy in the yard; but a fence may be made high near adjoining houses and lower elsewhere, this variation in line being turned to a decorative purpose. Additional height may be provided in certain places by means of tall shrubs and trees of medium size. Arbors may parallel the fences and open into the lawn, thus increasing the privacy of the outdoor walks without materially affecting the lawn space. It is difficult to secure absolute seclusion where adjoining houses are near, but so far as possible it is essential, and such features may, in addition, contribute to the decoration of the yard.

Whatever general arrangement is planned, the major part of the yard should be kept clear and open, and this open space should adjoin the windows or doors, thus serving as the main connection with the interior of the house. Cramped quarters require an effect of space and openness, and space in this relation to the house is most evident. Covered walks may, at times, be provided on one or both sides, and these may afford an interesting diversion after one has left the house. To look down such a walk from a minor window would, of course, not be uninteresting, but as a rule a small house does not have many openings into a yard, and a view into the open must therefore be the first consideration. Likewise, for occasional useful purposes and for recreation, space is needed immediately adjoining the house.

It has been stated that the plan for this area cannot accomodate a great variety of features, and that therefore the solution must lie in a few things well done. It will be found most economical of space and attractive in appearance if the main lines of the plan are drawn straight and parallel to the boundaries. Such plans will appear artificial; so, also, would informal effects and efforts to produce "landscape gardens." The former, however, will look formal in some degree; but the latter will look foolish. It should be remembered that these are city gardens, and that therefore conventionality is more in character with their architectural surroundings. The practical aspect of the use of straight lines appeals strongly to the writer, for in his opinion, design for any purpose, in order to be good, must also serve a useful end. Side boundaries may consist of flower borders, hedges, or merely a garden of flowering vines climbing on the fence; in any case, a single feature should be continuous along the greater part of the distance to the back fence. With a feature of straight outlines extending toward the back fence, the same distance will appear greater than if its outlines were curved, for simplicity and a greater scale will thereby be expressed.

Perhaps it is important to speak in some detail concerning the practical aspect of the use of straight lines. To begin with, it is well to remember that the areas with which one is dealing will average about forty feet in width. Assuming this dimension, the walls or fences on the two sides will take up two feet. A heavy growth of vines will occupy a like amount; and hedges, in the place of vines, require three feet each, and, when old, still more. A vine-covered fence behind a flower border would, on one side, occupy a total of 10 feet. This is one-fourth of the entire width; on the opposite side, accordingly, the minimum would be the vine-covered fence, or, better, a tall, fine hedge to balance, in some degree, the flower border. The lawn then left is but twenty-five feet wide. Now, were the edge of the flower border to be given a wavy line, notwithstanding that the distance is short for the use of curves, and assuming the minimum width for flowers to

be less than eight feet and the maximum not over ten, what would be the results? It should be recognized that it is difficult to maintain good effects in hardy-perennial borders with widths of less than eight feet. Since this is so, there will be parts of the border too narrow in width to maintain the best appearance. More serious, however, will be the unfortunate appearance of the open lawn which will have a width nearly equal to that of the bordering features. Looking from the house, the apparent width of the lawn will be that of the distance between the farthest projections of the border, while the apparent quality of the flower border would be that of its narrowest parts. Does not this mean a deal of trouble for a curved line, for which, after all, there is opportunity in neither length nor degree? Since the first consideration with respect to such an area should be the expression of openness, and of all possible spaciousness, details inconsistent with this purpose cannot be good.

The greater part of the back yard should be thrown into an open lawn or court. Whatever the bordering features, the width of the lawn should be greater than the sum of their widths; and a definite expression of spaciousness requires a substantial majority of lawn area.

In endeavoring to produce the effect of large space, there are several details well worth observing. Within reasonable dimensions, the higher the enclosure, the larger will the yard appear. The gardenlike and out-door-room effect of the yard, so much to be desired, requires a fence height of at least six feet. Americans are not accustomed to high walls, but when they make a garden, their tendency is unquestionably toward higher barriers. If the yard is to be enjoyed, privacy is essential; and at least at some points, if not all, fences should be even higher than six feet. Again, the effect of space in a lawn will be increased if the side borders have an even and neutral surface. For example, continuous and trimmed hedges appear longer than do rows of shrubs of different species and of varying heights. The ground width likewise appears greater if the surface is of unbroken turf or of uniform pavement rather than if broken by walks or flowers or ground cover, even though the last may not grow materially higher than the grass. In every detail, continuity of surface increases scale.

If back yards have a depth not much greater than their width (that is, speaking now merely of the area behind the house), it is best to plan the whole yard as one scene. If the depth is sufficient to subdivide and still leave an open lawn adjoining the house, approximately as described above, then a hedge or like barrier may be carried straight across the rear and the enclosure devoted to a salad garden, flowers, or any other purpose. Lot widths of forty feet or less will not as a rule, permit subdivisions parallel to the side boundaries. The apparent size of these yards may further be increased by placing interesting features, such as summer-houses, arbors, trees, or even flowers of somewhat dominant color, at the far end of the yard; for by this means attention is focused upon more distant points and the greater dimensions are thus emphasized. The element of interest in the yard is also thus increased, and still more is it enhanced when it is possible to present from the viewpoint of such an arbor or seat, an entirely different picture, such as a view into a small garden or merely the reverse of the yard scene.

Few persons have the time to maintain flowers, and frequently it is difficult to procure intelligent care for them. It is quite possible to design interesting flower features with annuals, which may be gardened by men sent from the



florists; but more artistic ability is required to plan annuals beautifully than is necessary to use the hardy perennials properly, and in this country it is rarely well done. Nevertheless, in a small space it is possible to use annuals with better effect than perennials. If flower beds can be made sufficiently wide, and if the perennials are closely grouped, it is still possible to use a few perennials and at the same time reduce the item of care. There are, in back yards, no interesting assets to build upon, and one must, "out of whole cloth," create a garden. It may be very like a room, or a very formal one, or merely a trim and orderly one. It may be dressed with flowers or with apparently useful architectural features; it may be made to require considerable care, or to require but grass-cutting and trimming,—all entirely according to personal taste or other circumstances. If the opening is too small for grass, it may be paved, and thus require only sweeping. But, whatever the limitations, and however it is to be used, be it no more than the European peasant's garden—a vine-clad arbor—the smallest space may be made to serve fittingly for pleasant and retired outdoor life.

As has already been suggested, rather than have very narrow passages between buildings, it is better to have none. If houses are made wider they can also be narrower, thus allowing the otherwise useless space at the sides to be added to the well-lighted yard area. If there is the possible necessity of an automobile drive, either for immediate or for future use, it is worth while to sacrifice all space on one side in order to allow for a drive on the other. The automobile drive may or may not be combined with an entrance walk to lead to a main entrance at the side of the house. (There are advantages in such a first-floor arrangement, as the front is then unbroken, and may be entirely devoted to rooms needing good light.) Perhaps herein is the greatest possibility for the use of narrow side space. These strips of land between houses are ordinarily unused except for a walk to the kitchen, and are dark and damp, with narrow pavement and much bare ground. They should either serve some purpose and be prepared therefor, or the space had better be covered by the house. There is considerable aversion to blocks of houses; but detached houses with but five or ten feet between them are no better. The semi-detached house (double house) is a very good expedient by which to save from three to five feet of otherwise useless side-yard space. Frequently with this arrangement, ten or fifteen feet may be obtained on one side, thus affording ample opportunity for a side entrance. This feature appeals, as it affords a use for the side strip of land, and insures its solution and good appearance. The problem of the side-yard strips in many instances means merely making these places look neat. With bare ground, they represent a failure. If grass will not grow, it may be that an evergreen "ground cover" will thrive; but if nothing will grow, gravel or pavement will have to be the solution. Pavements drain well and are easily cleaned; but the gravel, though requiring an occasional raking, relieves the monotony of too much pavement. Where a sidewalk passes close to a building (within one or two feet), either the paving of the walk should be extended to the wall of the building, or the space between should be filled in with stone. It is quite possible to make these passages look well. The entrance to the house, or the entrance to the back yard may be improved and decorated by a gate of good design. Some persons object to a main entrance at the side if kitchen service must share its use, but this consideration need in no way interfere. In many houses now-a-days the kitchens are on

the front rather than in the rear. Thus there may be a service walk on one side of a house and a main-entrance walk on the other, and there is no difficulty in so marking the walks as to clearly distinguish them, difference in width alone being usually sufficient.

Walks leading from the side passages need not continue in the same straight line after passing the house. If they are too near the lot boundary, they should be "stepped" away from the boundary-line hedge or fence to a distance one foot greater than the walk width. While it is well to preserve the unbroken width of the lawn, a sufficient border of green is very necessary. Allow ample widths for main walks, and, if they may be made interesting in any detail without appearing fussy, the decoration will be well placed.



## CHAPTER III

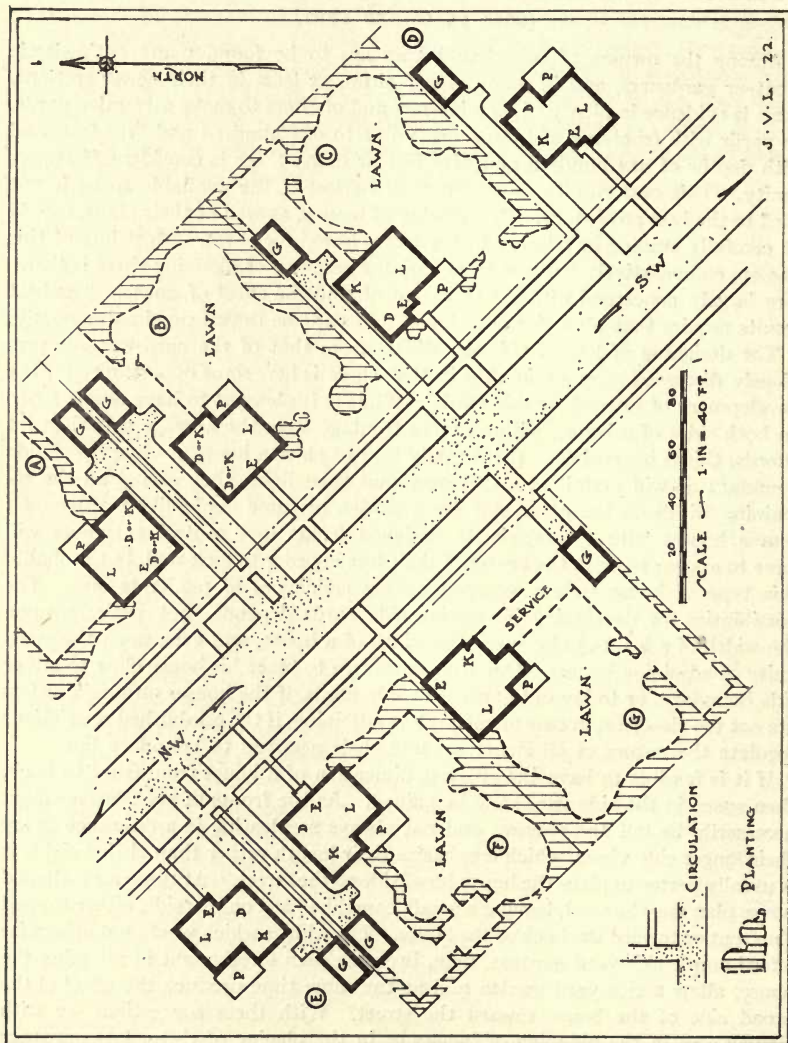
### THE ARRANGEMENT OF AVERAGE SUBURBAN LOTS

(LOTS 75 to 150 FEET)

Among the owners of suburban homes are to be found many enthusiastic amateur gardeners, and in many of our cities, at least in their newer sections, there is evidence in plenty of such interest and of effort to make attractive yards. In yards with frontages of from seventy-five to one hundred and fifty feet, and with depths of one hundred and fifty feet or more, there is considerable opportunity. This opportunity, however, may be lost if the available space is not used to the best advantage. The placing of houses, as well as their plans, should be carefully studied in relation to the lots selected for them. Most lots of this size are comparatively flat and level, and the problem of planning these is therefore largely concerned with the allotment of, and the effect of, space. The best results require that plans for both house and yard be drawn up simultaneously.

The designing of lots of this size differs from that of the narrower lots previously discussed most noticeably in that there is here some opportunity for the development of interesting side yards. While it is pleasant to have ample space on both sides of a house, without more frontage than the average suburban lot affords, this is impossible. It is usually best to place a house as close to one side boundary as will permit of a driveway and good light, thus saving all the remaining width on the other side for a garden or some gardenlike feature. Of course houses with symmetrically designed fronts and central entrances will have to appear to be in the center of their lots in order to look well, but probably this type of house is less common among residences of moderate size. The possibilities for developing interesting side yards depends, not entirely upon the width of a lot, but also upon the width of a house, and even upon the proximity of adjoining houses. One feels more free to place his house close to either side boundary, or to lay out gardens in side yards, if the houses on adjoining lots are not too close; or, in case of vacant lots adjoining, if the established restrictions regulate the nature of all structures and their nearness to boundary lines.

If it is feasible to have the greatest dimension of a house from front to back, then space in the side yard may be gained. As the fronts of such houses must necessarily be tall and narrow, and not always so pleasing in appearance as are their longer side views, which emphasize their length rather than their height, it is usually better to place the house broadside to the street. At times an L-shaped house plan may be used, leaving a small, courtlike yard on one side, either toward the front or toward the back of the house. Lot widths which would not otherwise afford ample side-yard gardens, may, by some such forethought in planning the house, allow a side-yard garden and at the same time produce the effect of the broad side of the house toward the street. With these suggestions, or with similar care in the planning of houses or in the placing of them, lots narrower than seventy-five feet front may offer some opportunity for side-yard developments. In selecting a lot, one should take note of both its width and its depth, and of its possibilities and its adaptability to his requirements.





In properties of this size, front yards may reasonably be allowed greater depth than the front yards of narrower lots. Building lines should be adhered to, but, within a variation of from ten to fifteen feet, houses may project beyond or recede from such a line according as the best allotment of front and back space may demand. Oftentimes it is difficult to convince persons of the advantage of small front yards. The idea that a house placed well back gives the appearance of an ample lot is by no means uncommon. Very likely, however, such persons have in mind examples involving much larger houses. But it should be remembered that an overly large front yard makes the front of a small house appear yet smaller. It is seldom that any ill effects result from even unusually small front areas, assuming, of course, that the plans provide for porches at the side or at the rear, as they should be.

The most important aspect of the building-line question is that of planning for the large open-lawn area in the rear. For both use and the best appearance of a completed scheme, sacrifices should always be made in the front to provide for a large lawn in the rear, or at the side and in the rear.

Since the general appearance of the street reflects on each individual property thereon, it is important to have a proper building line to begin with, and then to adhere to this established line if possible, or at least, to disguise any necessary discrepancy. As has already been said, marked variations on a street are not pleasant and are apt to mar the appearance of the entire street. These discordant differences may consist in the use of unlike styles of architecture, in the use of both open and enclosed front yards, or in any impropriety in the details of front-yard plans. The distinctiveness of a street, and, in many cases, its actual land values, increase with the uniformity and appropriateness of its houses and yards. There is always room for interesting variation within the bounds of reasonable uniformity. Many persons mistake mere incongruity for variety. It is entirely to be expected that a street should have some unity, and for the want of this unity most of the streets of our suburbs are not as beautiful as they might be. The same idea imbues whole suburbs and villages; and would that there were some hope that it might one day be corrected in our cities! The similarity of the homes is the main factor making for the charm of many European villages and cities. Although as individuals not all of these homes are interesting, at least they are neither unattractive nor ugly. There is variety in plenty, and it is the subsequent discovery of this variety, more noticeable when seen at close quarters, that sustains the charm of city, village, or street. New suburban developments in American cities might well take this lesson from Europe, or from those of our own old villages still to be found in undisturbed sections along the Atlantic Coast. The house and front yard which betray their owner's desire for notoriety betray also far worse faults, and with a vengeance!

As has already been suggested, with the exception of those having symmetrical fronts, it is rarely good policy to place houses midway between their side boundaries. The plans for most houses provide a large living room with two smaller first-floor rooms on one side, and place the dining room and the kitchen on the other. In any case, the kitchen must of necessity be on one side, and its location should determine the side on which to plan for out door service. Hence, in order to correlate the out doors with the in doors, it is evident that the driveway should be located on the kitchen side where it will be needed for everyday service to the

kitchen, the ice-doors, and the like, as well as for the occasional filling of the coal bins. The garage should also be placed in connection with the service yard. The drive may be made equally convenient as a main entrance, regardless of which side of the house it is placed. Hence in properties of this size the driveway is preferably on the service side of the house, and this may well be at that side of the house which is nearest the boundary.

If the dining room must be on the side overlooking such a driveway, this need not be considered unfortunate, for a dining room does not need especially beautiful outlooks as much as does the living room. The dining room is used for considerably less time than is the living room, and one is somewhat preoccupied during meals, and much of the time meals are served when it is quite too dark to see outside anyway. Morning sunlight in the dining room and in the kitchen is, however, very desirable. Also, it is quite possible, even in small and unpretentious houses, to arrange for the serving of occasional meals on the rear porch or on the terraces. First-floor plans may dispose of a kitchen toward the front or toward the back of the house but always adjoining the driveway, and still allow for a dining room that will command some view toward the rear if this seems preferable to the front outlook; but in any case, when a choice must be made, it is both reasonable and feasible to correlate the dining room primarily with the service side of a house; and it is likewise reasonable for the service side of a house to be quite near the side boundary.

What, then, are the minimum requirements for space on the service side of a house? The driveway need be no wider than eight feet, and this width is necessary only for safety in darkness and when excessive snow makes it difficult to keep the road. In addition to a driveway, it is highly desirable to have room for a strong boundary hedge, which, in maturity, may require five feet of ground space and become ten or twelve feet high. One may think he will not want so large a hedge, but it is better to allow for space for it, if possible, as the desire for a higher hedge may grow faster than the hedge. Some turf is desirable between the house and the drive, and likewise between the drive and the hedge, wall, or fence. It is also likely that one or more shrubs will be wanted at the house corners. Hence it is hardly safe to allow less than from ten to fifteen feet between the house and the boundary on the narrow side. But, with this explanation of the factors involved, rather than to endeavor to lay down fixed dimensions for extremely variable conditions, it would be better to suggest that the precise position of the house with respect to its side boundaries should be determined only after due consideration of the plans for both sides of the house. It is not desirable to have cramped appearances in any situation, and only by patient study may the best allotment of space on all sides be obtained.

While for the necessary and work elements, space may be limited to the extent of convenience and satisfactory appearance, there is no limit to the area and to the opportunity desirable for the recreational elements, both inside and out. Therefore it is fortunate if living rooms, porches, and terraces can be on the sunny sides of houses, and overlook the wider side yards and ample rear areas as well. There are times of the year and times of the day when each side of a house is more pleasant than the others, but for a greater part of the time the sunny sides are more pleasant. Furthermore, most plants grow best in full sunlight, and this is especially to be desired close to the buildings. It is far easier to make those



lawns and gardens successful which are the least shadowed by the house. It is quite possible to plan interesting out door courtyards and gardens of limited extent, but most schemes may be improved by more space and more sunlight. Only by careful study of plans for gardens or gardenlike features can the precise amount of space necessary be determined, and a wise apportionment made between the garden side and the service side of the property.

It is usually possible, and of course always desirable, to reserve the largest open space for rear lawns. In case no special side-yard features are wanted, this space may be incorporated with the rear. The area necessary for a garage, a clothes yard, vegetable gardens, and the like, should be carefully and compactly planned and limited in amount in order to save as much as possible for the rear lawn. As has already been stated, this open space should appear to be the largest open space on the property. It is not necessary to devote this yard all to a lawn; instead, it may include a tennis court, an orchard, or some similar variation. But an informal effect and breadth of scenery are to be striven for in the development of this yard. It may be a beautiful thing in itself, but it is primarily a setting for the varied recreational activities of an entire family. The rear yard is the only opportunity on a small property for the expression of extent of scene, and it is here that extent can be made most evident and most useful.

The elevation of a house with respect to the grade of the yard has an important influence on the circulation, indoors and out, and its appearance also depends on correct elevations. The effect of a more spacious yard may be obtained by setting the house low on the ground. Grade lines about houses are matters of the design of each individual house. In some cases high first floors are to be desired, but these are more likely to be in keeping with larger houses. There are instances where high first floors are not desirable but necessary, and under these circumstances it is possible to disguise the excessive difference between the outside grade and the inside floor level. In small, unpretentious houses, it is usually best to keep the first floor level very near that of the ground, that is, from 12 to 24 inches above it; and under ordinary circumstances there are no practical difficulties involved in such an arrangement. The outside aspect of a house set low is far more pleasing, and from the inside one sees the yard and the gardens in a more intimate relation. The difference between the first-floor level and the outside grade need not be the same on all sides of a house. The grade line on each side should be determined by the design of the house and in accordance with the grade conditions of the lot or of proposed changes. However, in regard to both appearances and convenience, requirements as to grade will vary on the several sides of a house. On the front, or entrance side, the house may properly appear to stand a little higher out of the ground than it should on the sides adjoining the lawns or gardens, where a more intimate relation should exist between the gardens and the windows and doors of the living rooms. Sometimes it is desirable to express some formality about the main entrance, and five or six steps at the front door may then look well. For the sake of convenience the steps at a kitchen door should be few. More important than all these considerations, however, is the connection between the living rooms and the private area. The nearer the outside and the inside elevations can be brought together, and still be consistent with practical considerations, the better.

The elevation of one or two steps is sufficient for appearances and for dryness, and all steps should, at any cost, be made of very easy pitch. In adopting ratios for outside steps, one should realize that the situation is quite different from that of the inside, and that flights indoors which are good would be very impractical outside. On a lot where the ground is rolling or evenly sloping, if it is not economical to level it all about the house, the grade lines may well be varied in accordance with these requirements.

Planning for sunlight is always an important factor in the designing of small properties. Windows are not likely to be darkened by adjoining houses when lot frontages are several times wider than the house fronts. Nevertheless, if buildings can be turned approximately forty-five degrees to the points of the compass, instead of directly north and south or east and west, interior light will be better and more evenly distributed during every day in the year. Likewise only under the same conditions may the maximum amount of sunlight be obtained about the exterior of the house. If one will but recall where the sun rises and sets in the different seasons—in summer rising and setting a little north of due east and west, and in winter a little south of due east and west—the reason for this suggestion will be readily understood. Abundance of sunlight is one of the first requirements for health. This has been appreciated more in the planning of interiors than in planning yards. But not only the insides of buildings, but the exteriors of houses and the surface of the ground about them should be designed with a view to obtaining plenty of sunlight. In fact, all ground about buildings should be exposed to the direct rays of the sun for at least part of every day. An excess of sunlight may be relieved by the shade of tall trees over the house, and cool retreats in some part of the yard are quite to be desired; but about buildings the dampness due to permanent shadows should be avoided.

Frequently there are strips of ground close to the house walls in which but few things will grow because of the excessive shade. If a little sunlight reaches all sides of a house, one thus has the additional advantage of being able to raise successfully a greater variety of plants, or even good turf close up to and all about the foundations. Nowhere in a yard is thrifty vegetation more necessary than about the house, and therefore both dampness due to too much shade, and an excessively dry condition due to unnecessarily wide eaves, should, if possible, be avoided. U-shaped courts on the northerly sides will always be dark and damp; but no such difficulty will result from L-shaped houses if the interior angle is so oriented as to receive some sunlight during the winter solstice. Confined yards, and damp, shaded surfaces of bare ground are with difficulty made fit and attractive for out door life. Moreover, they are by no means healthful places for children to play in. A considerable and worthwhile advantage is obtained by eliminating excess shade, and it should be remembered that such precautions will at the same time improve the conditions both indoors and out.

While the factor of sunlight is important, on small lots houses must be parallel with the streets on which they face. In the case of properties of several acres in extent, few if any difficulties are encountered in so orienting and planning the houses as to obtain the desired light. Therefore those who purchase lots of a half acre or less should choose streets running either northwest and southeast or northeast and southwest, or those of curved or irregular lines which will allow the desired freedom in the placing of buildings. Residential developments on



steep hillsides, and topography of a rough and irregular nature will, of course, require winding roadways of approach, and will result in lots of varied form and outline. Space in yards may be more economically planned if the houses are parallel to the lot lines, but in the case of irregular lot lines, the principle does not apply with the same force as in rectangular lots. Such irregular situations are not citylike but picturesque, and therefore greater liberties may be taken, with safety and with success.

Lots with from fifty to one hundred and fifty feet frontage afford greater opportunity of development than do those still narrower, but it should be remembered that the possibilities of such yards are nevertheless comparatively limited. Careful planning of their space should, as always, preface any actual work on their development. It is advisable to select a lot suited to one's requirements, as not only will it be easier and less expensive to develop, but there is also far greater possibility of its realizing one's ideal. Starting, then, with the advantage of suitable conditions, one should be careful to proceed logically, giving attention to the various aspects of the problem in the order of their importance. The house should be located and planned with due consideration for the space needed about it for outside features. Also, the first-floor rooms and the doors and the windows should all be properly related to the outside features. The general outlines of the whole plan should be studied with special regard to the proper allotment of space, the practicability and the possibility of the necessary use and of the desired effects,—and in this broader aspect should the entire plan be determined before any details are considered. No more should be attempted than may be well done. Properties of larger extent can not be taken as models. There is not space for a great number of features nor for a variety of effects. Simplicity should rule in the appearance of the whole and in all the details. The several yards and gardens should be few in number and simple in character; and decoration, sparingly used, should be applied only to such objects as seats, gateways, and the like, which are seemingly useful.





Chap IV

LANDSCAPE PLANNING  
FOR SMALL HOMES





Chap IV

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E. GORTON DAVIS  
DEPARTMENT OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE  
COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE, CORNELL UNIVERSITY  
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## CHAPTER IV

### DETAILS OF PLANNING FOR AVERAGE CITY LOTS

In starting a plan, it is highly essential that one school himself to see at first only general outlines, relationships between main parts, and general proportions. It was the purpose of the preceding chapter to emphasize the necessity of studying these fundamentals before giving thought to details. One starts with an outline of his lot, drawn to a known scale. To suggest a house, its position, and the approximate areas allotted to front, back, and sides,—in fact, to tell the whole story,—a square or rectangular outline, also drawn to scale, is cut from a piece of paper to represent the house, and this is placed somewhere within the lot outline. The square representing the house is then shifted about to different positions, until the proportions of the front and the back areas and of the sides seem about right.

Next, one may begin to think a little about the house itself. Considering the points of the compass and the local physical conditions, the first-floor plans for the house should be drawn accordingly. Some particular outline of the ground plan may seem better than the others in view of the lot width, its orientation, or the like. Thence one may proceed to plan the elevations of the house and to arrange the yard, the subdivisions of the several areas, and, finally, the details of the house and of the yard. It is highly important to plan thus by a logical sequence of thought. If the general relationships are correct, the plan will be convenient. If the proportions between the areas are good, the finished scheme will be pleasing, even though the details may be crude. Details may be changed; but a house may not easily be moved, nor house plans altered, if the original position or plans subsequently prove a handicap in the development of the yard. If one is primarily interested in the house, he should yet remember that a well-planned yard is necessary for the best appearance of the house; and, of course, good style and a suitable arrangement of the house are equally essential for the best development of the yard. It is absolutely necessary to solve a plan in its fundamentals before one can have a point of view for the consideration of its details.

As has already been suggested, the allotment of space about a house should, as a rule, provide the greatest amount for the recreational area—the gardens and the private lawn. The front yard should be next in size, and the service area the smallest. Variations of this apportionment are not only quite possible, but often desirable, but in such instances a satisfactory appearance will require careful attention to the use of architectural details and planting. There is no rule for the precise proportions desirable. If approximately correct, neither space, nor the opportunity for the apparent correction of proportions by careful handling of details will be lost. Herein lies the opportunity for a good designer, who may determine these fundamental proportions with great nicety, and thereby add both interest and usefulness to the plan. A designer may formulate the main lines of a plan with some general idea of its finished appearance; but nevertheless he invariably works from generalities to details—never from

details to generalities. An inexperienced person with no training in design had better deal with his problem step by step.

The front yards of suburban homes should be planned with regard to much the same principles as are recommended for the corresponding areas in small city properties. The chief function of the front yard of most residences is to furnish a suitable foreground for the house front. Since, admittedly, the house front is the most important part of a property that is seen from the street, to this all else becomes subsidiary—walks and roads, lawns, vegetation, and the like—and all these should therefore be so selected and so arranged as to make for the best appearance of the house. Nor should its appearance during the spring and summer seasons only be considered, but during all seasons; and special effort should be made to obtain an effect that will be at least similar, if not the same, during the whole year.

If the need of space in the rear has necessitated an unusually small front yard, there will be no difficulty in arranging for its satisfactory treatment. There may be but little need for planting, the walks may appear best straight or laid to some conventional plan, and a very simple and trim effect may seem more fitting; but the appearance of the whole will be none the less pleasing than if it were more elaborate. The space in the front may well be small rather than large, as, by comparison with it, the house front is thus emphasized rather than subordinated, and, furthermore, the width of the front is thus apparently increased.

Similarity of front yards on any street is much to be desired, and one should at least consider the customs of the street or block, whether or not he follows them. Slight variations from adjoining yards are permissible and frequently necessary, as most yards are not well done; but ill appearances are less likely to result if front yards are very simple and plain. Hedges or fences on the street line seem to be coming more and more into favor, but if a single lot of meager frontage is the only one in the block that is hedged or fenced, it may mar the appearance of the whole street; and, furthermore, the lot so fenced seldom looks as well as was expected. As a rule, small front yards appear larger and to better advantage if the center is open, for unbroken lawns always appear larger. The front yard is an entrance to the house as well as a foreground for the house; and while there is no reason to desire a great expanse of lawn there, for one who desires all possible appearance of space this simple scheme is best. Indeed, from whatever angle one may view the problem of this area, restrained rather than complex or elaborate treatments of it are best. As was mentioned in connection with narrow city lots, the simplicity and breadth of scale suitable for the foreground of the housefront are also more likely to be in scale with the larger scenery of a street.

Vegetation in front yards should be but sparingly used, should be of similar tones of green, and should be arranged about the edges of the lawn rather than in its center. Usually, with the judicious use of a few shrubs at the steps and at the house corners and, in some cases, with shrubs or trees grouped on the boundary lines near the house, and with an open lawn, the general requirements of the scene are satisfied.

The amount of planting will depend somewhat upon the size of the area; but a front always looks better bare of vegetation than crowded with planting. Single plants that are large and shapely are no more expensive than a number of small plants, but one had better plant but one, or a very few, small shrubs, and wait for them to grow, than to plant thickly with the intention of thinning out



later, for such thinning is apt to be neglected. Only under special and most unusual conditions should planting be made continuous across the base of a house front. The most important position for plants is that on either side of the main house entrance. This front door should be the center of interest of the whole picture, and the finest shrubs should be used here—usually a pair of shapely and similarly formed plants. Rounded forms are always good, and in fact, are usually better than conspicuous pointed forms, since the door, rather than the plants, is to be the main object of interest. If it is difficult to obtain suitable mature plants, it is sometimes possible to put three or more plants together to make one large plant.

At the house corners one or more plants frequently look well. Here either single plants or compact groups should be used, and these shrubs may be taller than those at the door, as well as more free-growing in habit. If there is a garden on one side of the house, it is likely that dense planting—a shrub border, or a hedge, or even a wall—from the house to the boundary will be required to enclose the private area. If continuous border planting is used, the plants composing it should be for the most part larger shrubs, or medium-sized or large trees, all of which must have low branches from the ground up. This characteristic is essential to the finished appearance, as otherwise the bare ground would show under the plants. This large material is very desirable, in order that the planting as a whole may be in scale with the tree-and-lawn scenery of the street.

Density of growth and color of foliage are factors of first importance in the selection of plants for front yards. Flowers on shrubs, or herbaceous flowering plants, are transient, and although their leaves may remain, many flowering plants look shabby after their flowers are gone. Some shrubs and trees have a habit of branching more densely than others, and this density gives them a winter value, as their form and appearance are nearly as good then as in summer. Shrubs which in winter display only a few scraggly branches are not desirable for front-yard use. Evergreens are best suited for the front yard, at least in part and where the best effects are desired, but one should be advised as to the hardiness of evergreens, and should also be sure of their ability to thrive in exposed, or, perhaps, dusty situations. In the selection of evergreen or deciduous plants, dark and normal greens are preferable. If flowering shrubs are selected, at no time during the growing season should there be a greater predominance of flowers than of green foliage, and white flowers are always best. The plant element should be used in such a manner as not to attract undue attention to itself, but rather to frame and to set off the front door and the house front. If the house is symmetrical in design, the planting should be nearly or quite as symmetrical; but if the door is at one side and if the house itself is nearer one side of the lot than the other, then the center of interest should be kept at the door by the use of more planting, taller plants, or by the arrangement of more interesting plant groups on the narrower side.

The interest should be centered on the front door, and balance should be restored if the house is not in the middle of its lot, and this can be accomplished mainly by the clever arrangement of planting.

It is not always necessary to resort to shrubs for front-yard planting. Especially if the scale of design is large and if the house is dignified in appearance, trees alone may accomplish the result, and that in a more simple and pleasing

manner. A tree with low branches sweeping the lawn at each side of a house may frame it better than low-growing vegetation. If the house is not in the center of its lot, a tall tree on the narrow side and a lower-growing tree on the garden side, either alone or grouped with small trees, may balance the planting of the front and also afford an interesting background for a side-yard garden.

There are many possible alternatives to these suggestions, and doubtless some that are particularly fitting for front-yard planting schemes. But training and experience in such matters, or keen observation on the part of the amateur, is necessary to determine them. While it might seem unnecessary to put it in words, in order that there shall be no uncertainty, let us say that in small front yards, no flower beds should be cut out of the lawn and no specimen plants should be planted in the center of the lawns; and probably it is unnecessary to proscribe all such objects as iron dogs, deer, vases, and gaily painted old hot-water boilers used as receptacles for flowers. Unfurnished yards of good grass look better than those gaudy with unsuitable and poor decoration or cluttered with too much planting. Frequently the best front-yard furnishing is that which is the least noticeable.

To that side of the house on which are located the living rooms should be adjoined the most private and pleasingly developed part of the yard. This area should appear to be the largest division of the outdoor space. Whether it is to be separated into a garden and a lawn, or left in one undivided space, or otherwise arranged, always the effect of amplitude should predominate. It may be possible to subdivide it into several parts, but one should be careful that such an arrangement does not diminish its apparent size. These areas may be regarded as outdoor rooms of the home, and in order to function similarly to rooms of the house, they must afford privacy.

Yards without any privacy receive little interest from their owners, as they cannot be used. And it is in the full realization of the usefulness of this area that the crux of the outdoor problem lies. One may own a house in the city and necessarily live in a city block; but why live in the suburbs of a city, where out-of-door space is available, and derive no advantage from the yard? The principal purpose of a private yard is to afford a pleasant and restful setting for recreation in the open air. Privacy is not only essential to the usefulness of the yard, but is also requisite for desirable views from the adjoining rooms. The living rooms are more interesting if some views from the windows express an extension of, and an appealing variation of, the living quarters of the house. It is desirable to have pleasant outdoor life at home as well as at a summer resort, and many persons have to make the most of what the home affords. The point for everyone to realize is that the home may be made to afford more pleasure than is commonly derived from it.

As was stated in the opening chapter, there is evidence in plenty, of a widespread interest in the betterment of yards. However, it has hitherto been customary to plan a yard to be attractive only from the street and from the windows of the house. The efforts to improve yards have therefore consisted, for the most part, in making showy plantations. Every suburban home should have an outdoor room, to look into, and to live in. The acid test of the fitness of any general scheme or of any detail proposed for the private part of the grounds should be the degree in which it possesses this roomlike character. If the space is large enough to be divided into several features—if there may be a small garden,



a terrace, or a courtyard, and still allow space for the expression of an ample lawn—it is well; but one should not forget that the extent of the grounds in this quarter will be more effective than on any other side of the house. Yard improvement aims to afford convenience for necessary features and to make all parts of the property look well, but it purposes primarily to save space and to bend all things toward the best development of the private grounds. Upon success in this part of a yard depends, largely, the success of the whole scheme.

The simplest scheme for the private grounds is a bordered lawn including both the side yard and the rear area. A hedge consisting of but a single species of shrub or tree will afford the desired enclosure. If a low wire fence is passed through the center of the hedge or erected on the outside, a hedge may be made almost as effective a barrier as a wall. If such a hedge is to be trimmed, on the sides only or on both top and sides, then, of course, a suitable plant should be selected. Of course, in very restricted areas only hedges or architectural barriers are suitable, as they occupy less space than free-growing plantations. Mixed borders of flowering shrubs may also be arranged as a hedge and thus occupy less space than curvilinear borders. Likewise, but little space is necessary for a trimmed hedge with groups of flowering shrubs or trees in the corners.

It is more satisfactory to enclose lawns with free-growing borders of trees and flowering shrubs, carefully arranged with respect to the necessary heights and the suitability of the plants, as by such means the desired enclosure is secured, the flowers and the fruits of the plants may be enjoyed and the minimum of care is required. A private lawn of unconventional character requires considerable space, but lots of one hundred by two hundred feet may be made to accommodate them if the space is carefully planned. If there is a conventional garden or even a very small courtyard, an informal lawn is a pleasing feature in contrast with the predominating conventionality of the house and the remainder of the yard. If all the space of the private grounds is in one lawn, flowering borders, even including some herbaceous flowers, will furnish the gardenesque character desired. For the greater part of the growing season a simple lawn furnishes a pleasant and restful outlook from the house, but its usefulness is more that of a playground than of a garden. While the so-called informal border is in most cases, more satisfactory, it should be realized that in very small yards conventional schemes such as hedges, trimmed or untrimmed, are also very interesting, will furnish the necessary enclosure, and, what is more important, will leave more space available for a playground.

Whether or not the need of a garden is felt, an enclosure smaller than the lawn and more closely connected with the house is much to be desired. While an expression of spaciousness is essential in a lawn, a terrace or a courtyard or a small garden needs only enough space for a company to sit in the open, as they would in an indoor room. If there is a space for a panel of velvety lawn in addition to the necessary pavement, or if it is possible to have flowers in an ample border or in pots, such decoration is much to be desired and is quite in keeping. Dry pavements within the privacy of one's immediate yard or garden are at times convenient and attractive places for outdoor exercise, and also for other reasons it is fortunate if this smaller enclosure is not too limited. But, unless a house is large, a small area is better suited to this purpose than a large one. As one uses his porch, so would he use a terrace or a small garden more frequently than a lawn. In fact,

passage to and from it would be much like that between adjoining rooms. Considering the best use of space and the relation of this private enclosure, together with its various requirements, to the house, it is usually preferable to locate it in the side yard.

What, then, are the possibilities and the limitations in planning side-yard gardens on lots varying from seventy-five to one hundred and fifty feet, or thereabouts, in width? To begin with, the level of this area should be as near the level of the first floor of the house as is practical. The cellar of the house should be planned to receive little or no light from the garden side, and coal windows and the like should be on other sides of the house. With a masonry house, no difficulties will arise if the ground is but a step or two below the first floor level; but with a house of frame construction, the wooden sills must be protected from dampness, and for these houses two or three steps may be necessary. While it is desirable that gardens should be in every detail, closely related to the house, necessary steps in excess of one or two may be made attractive by the use of porches or terraces one step below the house-floor level, and in exceptional cases decorative stairways may be appropriate. While it is possible to make interesting gardens in side yards at levels considerably below that of their houses, the area of such gardens is apparently reduced, and due to loss in reciprocity of view and because of inconvenience in use, the much-desired expression of intimacy between garden and living room is impaired. All steps between houses and gardens should be made in such a ratio of rise to tread that their ascent is both gradual and comfortable. The ratios of indoor stairways are not suitable for out-of-door stairways. Rarely should garden steps be steeper than the ratio of six inches rise to fourteen inches tread, and frequently the rise should be even less in proportion to the tread, in order to express better the close relationship between the various levels. Abruptness in outdoor steps, especially in features closely related to a house, makes for crude appearances and seriously mars an otherwise interesting garden.

The least conventional scheme for this private side-yard enclosure is a small lawn with a free-growing border of shrubs. To attempt a curvilinear outline for the planting around this area is unwise, as it is wasteful of space, appears forced, and is utterly inconsistent with the requisite conventionality of this area which is so closely related to the house. Therefore, whether the bordering shrubs are to be trimmed as a hedge or allowed to grow naturally, they should be arranged in straight lines. If the effect of a trimmed hedge is desired, those shrubs or trees should be selected which will make good and proper hedges. Of course, trimmed hedges make for a more formal effect than free-growing hedges, and architectural barriers, whether used wholly or in part, will add a still greater degree of conventionality. If more than one species of flowering shrubs are used, the several kinds should be disposed in a balanced arrangement, whether evenly mixed or massed. If garden flowers are to be used within, hedges, walls, or lattices should be provided as a suitable background. A balanced arrangement of potted flowers or of larger plants in tubs is a simplified expression of this grass-covered and hedge-bordered garden.

Elaboration of this side-yard living room should deal first with its essentials—the surrounding barrier and the ground covering—rather than with its decoration. An effective barrier is necessary to make an interesting interior and to insure privacy, if the garden is to be enjoyed. Hedges should be dense from the base to the top. As they will need to be high, one can well afford to make them wide.



A kind of shrub or tree which grows tall needs to be allowed to grow to considerable width also, in order to remain thrifty. Shrubs should be set in two or more rows to assure the achievement of density. By a careful selection of plants, it is possible to use a row of tall-growing shrubs with a row of lower-growing shrubs on either side, thus obtaining greater height and at the same time being certain of density at the base. The heights should shut out views from adjoining property, from the street, and also, to some extent, cut off the remainder of the yard. Closely neighboring houses frequently make privacy difficult of attainment in side-yard gardens. If there is no space for tall, slender trees along the property line, an overhanging lattice, a pergola, or awnings about the edges or against the far side of the garden may be necessary to afford some private retreat within the area. Architectural barriers will be necessary when there is no space for free-growing planting or even for hedges. Walls or lattices should be of simple design and should be both in keeping with small houses and comparatively inexpensive. If there is no ground space for flowers or other decoration, some color may be provided by the enclosing plantations, or by vines, or walls, or lattices. If there are flowers within the garden, however, the hedges or walls should be planned as backgrounds only. However, decoration is not a first necessity, as interest may be supplied and maintained by a handsome pavement, hedges perfect to the extent of being beautiful, and distinctive and inviting-looking chairs and seats. If it has the appearance of comfort and retirement, any feature—garden, courtyard, or terrace—will have its appeal; it will have atmosphere.

There will be many occasions when one would like to use his garden or courtyard but cannot because of its dampness, if the entire surface be grass covered. It is best, therefore, to have some part of the area in a satisfactory and interesting pavement, in order that in all moderate weather this outdoor room may be used. While a grass surface in perfect condition is beautiful, it is very difficult to keep even and perfect if it is partially shaded or if it receives very hard wear. Hence, for very small areas it is best not to attempt grass but to resort to stone, which may be made none the less interesting. If the space available for side-yard gardens is large enough, its surface may be interestingly varied with walks and panels of grass, and even with beds of flowers.

The boundaries of a side-yard garden are of course fixed by the house on the one side and on the opposite side by the property line; and while the continuation of the lines of the front and back faces of the house to the side boundary are usually accepted as the other limits of this area, these lines may be moved forward or backward, to enlarge or reduce the area, so long as they are kept parallel with the lines of the house. In most small properties, the lot lines are rectilinear, and the house is parallel with the street lines if not also parallel with all the lot lines. In this small sideyard, the space is too small to permit of any angularity of form which is neither determined nor controlled by the lines of the house or of the lot. The close relation of the side-yard garden to the house should limit its form, or outline, to parallelism with the house. It will accordingly be necessary to plan the outlines of this area on these lines, if the space available is to be used most economically, and if, also, the best appearance is to be assured. Curvilinear outlines for such small gardens are not practical, as the space is not sufficiently large to allow for a variety of curves, unless the scale adopted is small to the degree of pettiness. Within this area, some degree of conventionality is most fitting, and any departure from conventionality is likely to result in a waste of

space, and is sure to detract from the appearance of the garden. A sufficiently large private lawn may be accorded some degree of informality, and, in fact, this is much to be desired. But a garden or a courtyard in close relation to the house should partake of the character of the house. It is to be used as a room, and it is therefore eminently reasonable to plan it as an outdoor room.

As has been already stated, probably the simplest plan for this garden is a rectangular area with a high enclosure, with unbroken turf or a pavement and, decorated only with such furniture as may be necessary. If further decoration is desired, some one thing should be featured. Walls may be decorated by designs laid in the masonry; lattices may be plain and draped with vines, or they may be more elaborate and have vines over them; hedges may have recesses cut into them for flowering plants; or again, walls or lattices may be made garden-like with flowering vines; but whatever the scheme of decoration adopted, a single one should be sufficient. If a flower border is to be the decorative feature, the walls of the enclosure should be planned as a neutral background. If an arbor or a small summer house, however simple, is to be included, the design of this architectural element should be so exceedingly refined in general proportions and in detail that it may be an all-sufficient decoration. If there must be a combination of decorative features, some one feature should predominate, and the garden should not be elaborated beyond the degree suitable to the house and, to the remainder of the property. For small properties, simplicity is best; and it should be remembered, further, that only simplicity is consistent with dignity and is expressive of refinement. Simplicity is also quite suitable for the more elaborate homes.

In the case of very small side yards (10 x 20 to 15 x 25 ft. or thereabouts), it is best to leave the main ground space unbroken. As space in the corners is of the least importance, it is in this quarter that one may safely introduce tubbed plants, or corner beds of flowers, or the like. Hence, as areas become larger, the ground spaces that may be taken from the pavement or the lawn of larger areas are, in the order of their importance, first the corners, then a strip all along one side, and finally strips along two, three, or even all of the sides. If the entire open space is concentrated in but one area, it appears larger; and one should plan to have the greater part of this space open for tables and chairs or for walking about. The garden should be decidedly ample before any flower beds are introduced into its center. If the area is too large to look well with its entire surface paved, although some dry and smooth footing is desired, the problem may be satisfactorily solved by a pattern of grass and paving. This both fulfills the practical requirements of good walking, and affords the pleasing appearance of fine, even, turf, without in anyway detracting from the sense of openness and spaciousness. It is thus possible, with a rather large area, to obtain a very simple but dignified expression. A garden may be sufficiently large to permit an arrangement of border flower beds, parallel walks, and a center bed, but it may not be sufficiently large for the subdivision of the center bed by intersecting walks. But in order to decide on any of the above schemes, it is first necessary to know something of the dimensions practical for walks, terraces, flower beds, and the like.

Flower beds that are planned for annuals may be made very much narrower than those planned for perennial flowers. There are many annual garden flowers that are small and that remain about the same size all summer. From annuals of



the desired colors small sizes may be selected, and, as they are apt to continue in bloom all summer, it is not necessary to arrange the different kinds of plants in tiers or to provide for many different varieties in order to obtain continuous bloom. Most herbaceous perennials, however, are in flower for but a part of the growing season; their roots are larger, and a variety must be used in order to continue their floral effect. Therefore, a border two or three feet wide, which may be made to look very well in annuals, is quite too narrow if herbaceous perennials are used. In order to maintain a continually good appearance from early spring until frost, borders of herbaceous perennials should be not less than eight feet wide, and greater widths, up to twelve feet, are far better.

The colors of most of the perennial garden flowers are less garish than those of annuals, and unless one has a finely developed sense of color, he is safer in dealing only with the herbaceous perennials. All colors look better with a background of a fine-textured, dark green hedge, and with such a background a bright color is very cheerful, and combinations of bright colors, if cleverly arranged, may be very effective. A large proportion of white flowers with a small proportion of flowers of one other color is usually a safe and pleasing combination. In small city gardens sometimes only annuals will thrive, and furthermore, in many of these, but little space is available for flowers. Hence, in such cases, it is advisable for one to plan to use annuals and to give his problem the careful study necessary. In preparing plans for the incorporation of flower beds in small gardens and courtyards, one should decide on the kind of flowers best suited to his scheme, and should carefully plan the dimensions of the flower areas accordingly.

The space allowed for a table and chairs out-of-doors should not be smaller than is found practical inside the house, and indeed, out-of-doors this area should be somewhat larger. As its use is to be primarily that of an outdoor room, the arrangement of the tables, the chairs, and the settees therein is of first importance. In the planning of these outdoor sitting rooms, as well as in that of porches, terraces, and small gardens, one should arrange ample passageways from the house to the lawns and about the areas themselves, so that it may be possible to stroll about the garden without interrupting or annoying a seated group. For example, doors from the house to the center of a terrace will necessarily lead across the terrace in such a manner as to cut it in two, thus necessitating the arrangement of the chairs in two groups. Doors from the house to a small garden, whether opening directly into the garden or passing across a porch or a terrace, are therefore more out of the way if to one side of the center. By this arrangement, the areas are cut unequally; the smaller area is then allotted as a place in which to walk about, while the usefulness of the larger area, for which the private garden is primarily designed, is unimpaired. The widths of walks and of steps should not ordinarily be less than four feet. Moreover, as these features are a part of the living rooms and are recreational areas of the home, they should be made to appear as generous as possible. Even a small garden is improved by ample dimensions in these details. Between beds of low-growing flowers walks will appear wider than those of the same width passing between tall-growing flowers. However, in most cases it is highly desirable to make walks wider than four feet, and even an additional six inches will be effective, though widths of five and six feet should be employed wherever possible. Generous dimensions in these details give to small gardens a style and a character which is

much to be desired. Many small walks do not make a small garden appear larger, but rather tend to make the design seem petty.

Lots with a frontage of from 100 to 150 feet should have, on the garden side, from 40 to 80 feet between the house and the side boundary; and, while it is highly desirable to allow an ample width for a boundary screen of trees, in as much space as this there is opportunity for more than a mere courtyard garden. However, if a larger garden is not desired, more area may well be devoted to heavier screen planting along the boundary, or the garden need not be made the full width of the house and the additional area may be thrown into the front or, preferably, the rear. It must be admitted that small gardens have a charm peculiarly their own, and if one does not want the care of an extensive garden, the very small, roomlike enclosure satisfies all practical needs with respect to this feature. In most cases, greater space should not receive more elaborate planning; rather, this is the opportunity for the use of ample dimensions in simple schemes. A large space divided by many narrow walks and small flower beds, produces the effect of several small gardens rather than of one large one.

However large a side yard may be, this space is usually the best location for a garden, as it is smaller than the back yard, is not apt to have an interesting distant view and therefore needs barriers along the side and the front, whatever may be the plan for the yard; and, finally, regardless of its extent, this area is still most closely related to the living rooms of the house. While the simplest scheme may appear to be that of planning the side and back yards as one area, it is not difficult to plan to separate, either wholly or partially, the side yard from the rear, and to plan this in such a manner as to require no more upkeep than if this garden area were merely a part of the lawn. If a lawn is of necessity small, it is more likely to be used as a garden; but, as a feature in itself, a lawn is more successful if quite ample. It should be realized, however, that both the lawn and the garden each have their specific uses, and that either feature alone, even at its best, cannot entirely replace the other. If flower gardens are wanted, they should be carefully planned in order not to require more care than can be given or procured for them, as an unkempt garden adjoining a house is most unsightly.

While some general suggestions for the planning of flower gardens for larger areas have been offered here, the great latitude of this subject makes discussion difficult beyond what has already been said. For a situation so close to the house as is the private garden, it would perhaps be wise to start with a bit of expert advice. However, there is a great deal of good to be gained from honest, independent efforts and even from mistakes, and, while one may waste some money and time in making changes, there is no reason why he should not try to plan his own garden, provided he has first conceived it as a part of the plan for his whole property. One should begin by planning the place as a whole; then he should plan his garden as a whole, with perhaps a few of its details in mind. But under no circumstances should he begin by planning floral combinations. Other gardens should not be copied, either in whole or in part, as one's own garden will be interesting only as it is some logical evolution of his particular conditions. To see other interesting gardens is helpful and does stimulate one's ideas, but ideas are original, at least in their detailed application. One should endeavor to plan a garden that is suited to his house, and he should always remember that there is safety in simple plans. If amateur gardening will develop better taste, the "trained eye" can well afford to pardon some mistakes. Moreover, even the "trained eye"



has itself made some mistakes, and has also found some pleasant surprises in the gardens of amateurs.

As a garden in the side yard may function as a barrier between the front and the rear yards, so also may any long gardenlike feature serve between the rear lawn and the area devoted to service. If a gardenlike feature is used, it should be one that requires little or no more width than a border planting, lest the area of the lawn should thereby be unfortunately reduced. A long straight walk between shrubs and trees, or beneath them after they have grown taller, is interesting. A collection of such shrubs as lilacs may well be used to border such a walk, and, in other cases, tall-growing shrubs may be trained to form a covered arch, thus affording a shaded approach to the more distant parts of the yard and at the same time being in itself an interesting feature. Grass walks with flower borders on one side are attractive, but the care of so many flowers is a factor to be considered, and especially if there is, in addition, another place for flowers in the garden. If the yard is unusually deep, the garden may be located far in the rear with a long, shaded walk leading thither.

A garden placed so far from the house should be directly connected with the house by some conventional passageway, or perhaps by a less formal walk, according to the style of the garden, such as a straight walk. A distant garden need not be so formal as a garden immediately adjoining the living room. In fact, in so remote a situation one is freer to experiment with plants and with effects to be obtained by plants, and may even try different designs. If the setting is suitable for a garden of native plants or for plants growing in or about water, even naturalistic effects may be attempted; and, while time and effort may be required to produce a naturalistic setting, in a sufficiently large space it may prove both appropriate and pleasing. Sometimes ugly buildings on adjoining lots necessitate heavy planting along the boundaries, and within these it is occasionally possible to develop woodland effects or naturalistic gardens. When thus they serve a double purpose, one is less inclined to begrudge the space occupied by heavy borders. It is highly desirable to make the most of small yards, and if any feature can be made to perform more than one service the interest obtainable within the same space may be increased. All this is but a part of careful and clever planning. Walks, partly hidden and partly in the open, that lead one about the confines of a yard add considerably to the interest of a pleasure ground. They afford a certain intricacy and variety which contribute considerably to the apparent size of an area. A winding path, which leads deviously from the house to outlying garden spots, summer houses, or arbors, displaying the yard from different points of view, may succeed in transforming a small yard into one apparently as large as that of an ample suburban home, and may also afford equal privacy and retirement.

To appear at its best, a lawn should produce the effect of amplitude. Furthermore an expression of informality is usually more consistent and pleasing. The lawn area of many yards, even after the most economical planning, will be found none too large, and further care will be necessary in order to obtain the greatest amplitude and the best general effect. Curvilinear outlines for borders should have a logical reason for their existence. The entire lawn should have a pleasing form, and its outlines should bear some relation to the adjoining features and subdivisions of the yard. The border curves should not be petty in scale, nor should the recesses along the boundary be so small as to be unfortunately narrowed or entirely closed when the growing plants reach maturity. Usually it is best to allow the borders greater

width at the corners of the lawn than along the sides, thereby obtaining a clear but somewhat rounded space of turf. A lawn appears larger and gives the effect of greater spaciousness if its area is wide on the rectilinear axes rather than on the diagonals. Deep recesses are interesting if there is sufficient space to permit their use; and even outstanding specimen shrubs or trees may be planted effectively in these places, where they are advantageously displayed against the background of the border. But in any lawn, as in any garden, the first thought should be for the necessary open space, and scenery consistent only with great meadows cannot be reproduced in small back yards.

In planning the borders of the lawn, one should realize in the beginning that his object is not the planting of bushes that are interesting in themselves, but of such bushes as will make an appropriate background for the lawn. Many small lawns would be far more pleasing if their borders consisted only of free-growing, tumbling masses of greenery, wherein the various kinds of plants are practically indistinguishable. Flowering effects are by no means undesirable in lawn borders, but too great a variety is sure to spoil the total effect. A limited variety of flowers is, in most cases, to be desired, especially as a profusion of flowers is expected in spring and early summer, but a variety of foliage is unfortunate. The indiscriminate use of the so-called "foliage plants," whose leaves may be yellow, blue, purple, or any unusual green is unpardonably bad taste. As a rule, the peculiar quality of color in these foliage plants is in itself not good, and combinations of them are even worse. The Creator furnished every plant with foliage of that tone of green best suited to set off the color of its flower. Most native plants have leaves of a desirable green, but of the shrubs and trees available for such planting, only dark greens, so far as possible, should be selected. Moreover, plants with small-sized leaves are preferable to those of coarse foliage. If one is fond of flowers, of their fruit, or of the general aspect of any particular plant, whether at all seasons or at any particular season, he should recognize that showy plants can be seen to best advantage only when they have a suitable background. Most, if not all, of the border plants should have good foliage, and should be naturally densely branching. A background of good foliage is most needed when many of the plants are in flower. When only occasional shrubs are in flower or showy with berries, a predominating mass of green all about them makes their color appear far more brilliant.

If a surrounding plantation is composed for the most part of neutral tones, then color, pointed forms, evergreens, or other exceptions to this neutral background are accentuated. It is desirable to have these accentuated features at points in the border that are the termini of the longest views or of views of special importance. But if the border is composed for the most part of diverse colors or of variously pointed forms, it is not a good background, as it is restless rather than restful, and it affords no possibility of further accent where accent is needed. Thus, in planning his lawn, one must remember that it should be spacious; that its outline should express a proper relation to the adjoining features, as well as being interesting in itself; that it should have an effective barrier of vegetation, so selected and so arranged as to be for the most part of neutral greens; and that plants of special interest should be carefully placed with respect to the design of the entire yard. Informal scenery needs as careful planning as do formal effects. The outlooks from the house to the lawn and from the garden to the lawn, as well as the arrangement of the walks about the entire yard and all other general relationships of the



whole property to the lawn, should determine its general scheme. With such a general plan for a beginning, one may proceed to arrange the details of the lawn and of its border planting. Haphazard arrangements of plants, scattered groups of various color schemes, and a diversity of specimen plants all make for confusion as seen from a distance. The entire effect always should be a first thought. Pretty, or even striking scenes, if well placed, fit in as appropriate parts of the whole plan, and are interesting in themselves as well.

The service yard should be carefully planned in order to reduce the space allotted to it and at the same time to insure its convenience and neatness. The minimum space consistent with convenience will make for the easiest use of this yard. The service yard must necessarily lie somewhat in view of the house, and for this reason it should be so planned as to encourage neatness. All space that is not needed in this area should be combined with the rear lawn. Further, it is important to restrict the service area to that part of the yard nearest the kitchen, and to arrange its outline parallel to the boundary of that side. A service yard which projects in the direction of the lawn cuts off the house view of that part of the lawn lying beyond it. It may be possible to use to advantage the space thus cut off from the view of the house, but it is best to so define the outlines of the service area, and to so locate it, that the space left for the lawn remains in a single area and one of regular outline. Thus in most cases it is best if the service yard can be planned to occupy a space against the service side of the house; if it can continue from the house to the rear boundary; and if it can be of sufficient width to allow dimensions practical for buildings, turncourts, and other necessary service-yard features.

While a garage is usually the most important single feature to be accommodated in the service area, other possible considerations are a turncourt, a laundry yard, a vegetable garden, a cut-flower garden, cold-frames, a chicken-house and runs, a compost pit, and access to the kitchen door, the coal bins, the cellar entrance, the ice door, and the like. While for most of these features, the minimum dimensions are more or less fixed, in some instances the same space may be made to serve more than one purpose. Rectilinear outlines are the most practical, for an area of regular form will subdivide most easily and most economically. While a garage facing the street and at the end of a straight driveway is apt to display a mussy interior when the doors are left open, this arrangement is the most economical of space and is the only scheme possible in small areas. A garage so built as to be apparently part of the house although actually quite disconnected from it, looks far better than a distinctly separate structure. But unless the lot is very wide, the garage should open in a manner similar to that of a separate building,—that is, facing the street. The open-door difficulty is not a fundamental consideration, as it may be remedied with but a little trouble; very likely some one will soon invent a device for opening and closing these doors more easily. The garage may be placed directly at the side of the house if one is willing to back in or out; and even in the case of houses near the street, it may be better to forego a turncourt in the rear and to place a garage no farther from the rear face of the house than will allow for necessary space and light about the kitchen. Of course, the shorter the garage drive, the less space it will occupy and the less will be the cost of the construction and maintenance of the drive. A turntable within the garage, although expensive, may be cheaper than the space required for a turncourt and the cost of paving it. Unless an ample area may reasonably be allowed for the service yard,

and in particular for the turncourt, it is better to place the garage in the closest possible relation to a house and to abandon all consideration of a turncourt.

An automobile turncourt may consist of a complete turn, or of a place for backing around a quarter circle and turning ahead for another quarter of a circle, a turn which may be called, from its shape, a "T." The T has the advantage of requiring only half the space that the complete turn demands. The T laid out for a large car will sometimes allow a small one to turn completely. The dimensions required for turning is known for most automobiles, and anyone can easily determine that of his own car. The garage may be located just far enough back from the house to allow for a T between itself and the house, and the pavement required at the back door may thus serve simultaneously for a walk and a drive. A complete turn will ordinarily require more space than its convenience is worth, although its center may at times be used as a drying area. Complete turns require a diameter from fifty to sixty feet at the least, and are rarely economical on lots of less than two hundred feet frontage. Unless a complete turn can be turfed in the center and a part of the area be made to serve some additional purpose, such a plan is not advisable. In the positions just recommended for the garage, it should be kept near the side boundary. Placing the garage as close to the house as is practical also tends to conserve the area behind it, which will probably be assigned to work yards, vegetables, cut-flower gardens, compost pits, and the like. In case this space is not needed for work yards, it may be a useful enclosure for small children, where they can play with less restraint than on a lawn and can have their toys, sand-boxes and various playground apparatus. The location of the garage and of the driveway leading to it is the largest factor in the planning of the service yard, and is therefore necessarily the first thing to be considered. The least possible area should be used, however, and the space still unoccupied should be carefully allotted to the other features that must be accommodated.

Suggestions for the barriers for the service yard may be found in the discussion of garden and lawn barriers. Limited space may suggest walls, or lattices, or wire fences with vines, according to what seems fitting for the house and yard in question. Free-growing borders, of course, are practical only when there is considerable space. But here, as elsewhere, one should think primarily of such factors as space, what will look best with the rest of his yard, and what he can afford to build and maintain. The barrier between the service yard and the lawn may be a wall, a lattice, or a fence, with or without vines over it; or it may be a plantation of shrubs and trees, trimmed hedge fashion on the garage side and allowed to grow freely on the lawn side. It is possible to use an arbor to separate these areas and at the same time to furnish as a walk to the rear. A pleached arbor, made by training shrubs or trees in the form of an arbor, is an interesting feature in itself, and would also serve as a covered walk; and, moreover, from the outside it could be made to resemble a border plantation. In a small vegetable garden, one may plan to cultivate close up to the walls. But it is neither possible nor practical to plan to cultivate close to hedges or vine-covered fences, for the roots of these growing things will spread into the garden space, and there will also be a strip of ground that is worn by walking or in caring for the hedge, and other difficulties will arise. With such barriers it will therefore be found best to plan a walk about the outside of the garden plot, as with such an arrangement one may conveniently cultivate close up to the line. The walk is a needed convenience, and the area for cultivation will be all in one and the largest possible. Any other buildings to be



placed in this area should be included in the garage or else erected along the boundaries. Unless small buildings are decorative in themselves, as might be the case with children's play houses, they are apt to be unsightly. However interesting they may be, small buildings must be correlated with the entire plan for the yard if they are to become an integral part of its scheme and look well. It is possible to place garages, playhouses, arbors, and like structures along the lines of division between service yards and lawns, and thus they may serve simultaneously as boundaries, and as decorative and useful features. Of course, all coordination of the parts of a yard plan expresses planning and forethought, and makes the yard appear orderly, useful, and interesting,—it looks well because it is essentially good.

Considerable interest may be added to small yards by the judicious use of gateways, lattices, trellises, arbors, seats, and other architectural details. It is well to use only such details as are apparently useful. A gateway between the garden and the front yard is a part of the barrier between the public and the private areas; but it can also serve as a decorative feature of the garden. Necessary lattices and walls may likewise be made decorative. Seats should not be so placed as to be conspicuous termini of views, but should rather be situated in those parts of the yard or garden where one would enjoy sitting. A bird house or a bird bath may be grouped with a decorative seat; but whatever the situation chosen for them, it should not be such as to make them appear as an afterthought. All decorations should be conceived only as a part of an entire plan. The designs of such decoration should be refined, carefully proportioned, and of suitable motif; furthermore, they should be suited to the house and yard in style, in material, and in workmanship. Costly decorative objects, or imitations of them, are usually in poor taste; and such decoration, especially if unsuccessful, makes a garden appear ordinary. The results are displeasing indeed. So far as possible, wood should be used about the garden, although iron is also appropriate for gates if the design is very simple.

Water features are, as a rule, a proper decoration only for more elaborate residences. For most city or suburban homes, running water is a considerable expense, and in this respect alone fountains or pools are costly. Yet to have fountains which only play on great occasions is ridiculous. A fountain necessitates constantly running water, and, in fact, fountains become interesting only when they have been used for a considerable time till they have become mossy. It is sometimes possible to use such features as a bird bath properly and with pleasing effect, but in very simple homes one had better resort to other means of decoration. Much the same may be said concerning the use of sundials. These were formerly a useful means of telling the time; but now-a-days everyone recognizes their impracticability for all but elaborate decorative schemes. It is impossible to give definite advice, or to make definite statements, regarding these features, as every situation is necessarily a law unto itself. A good plan needs little or no decoration, and if one restricts the decoration of his yard practically to useful architectural details, even within these narrow limits he must use great judgment and exercise much good taste.





Chap I

LANDSCAPE PLANNING  
FOR SMALL HOMES

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E. GORTON DAVIS  
DEPARTMENT OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE  
COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE, CORNELL UNIVERSITY  
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## CHAPTER V

### THE ARRANGEMENT OF COTTAGE GROUNDS IN COUNTRY OR VILLAGE

The word cottage carries with it many associations,—appealing, attractive, and homelike. Some persons will recall European rather than American examples, and even those who have not travelled abroad have been familiar, most likely, since the days of their childhood, with the illustrations in Kate Greenaway's books and with other similar pictures of English cottages and cottage gardens. The simplicity and homely beauty of the cottage homes, which are so common in England, are generally known; and, in fact, among the village homes of all the countries of Europe, there are many examples which are equally attractive. Our own country is not without its quaint villages and charming cottage homes; and occasionally a cottage surrounded by its old garden is yet to be found. These old villages of our own continent, along the eastern coast, are all that remain today of our colonial village life. Many of these old-time buildings are still standing, and the yards of some retain their original old fences; but the gardens are gone. There are records in plenty to show that the colonists invariably brought with them from their home land, seeds and the roots of their garden favorites. Their native English tradition was that of a house in a garden setting. But neglect makes short work of a garden, and only such enduring things as boxwood remained. Until recently, old boxwood hedges and trees were by no means uncommon in the yards of old villages in New England, New Jersey, Delaware, and Maryland, and they flourish still in Virginia and in the South. Now-a-days there is a tremendous demand for them for the gardens of the wealthy. In pre-Revolutionary days, without doubt, cottage gardens were the customary settings for every cottage home, just as the dignified avenues of approach, the ample courtyards, and the gardens were an invariable part of every colonial manor.

Of course it was inevitable that this phase of our colonial life, its home, should have to pass, along with the life itself. The century following the Revolution was a period of constant change and rapid growth. Established trade with Europe was disrupted, and consequently many lines of industry depending upon it were affected, ports were closed, and whole villages were abandoned. But on the other hand, new and greater opportunities were opened: the children and the grandchildren of the early colonists turned pioneer, and moved westward, to pass through a similar period of struggle with virgin country and with crude conditions. The colonial life of America was from one hundred to one hundred and fifty years old at the time of the Revolution, and in that time it was not a new country, but merely a colonial life that had matured. It is, perhaps, little to be wondered that in a similarly brief period of time, and one, moreover, interrupted by a war most disastrous to the country's progress, that more has not been accomplished in America toward settled living conditions and toward a general desire for beauty and refinement in home surroundings.

It is unfortunate that an appreciation of the beauty of simple and homely

things is not encouraged, fostered, or preserved among the peasantry of a country, or among those of limited means. Such appreciation, it would seem, would make for greater contentment and thrift. Rapid advancement and increase of income, however, appears to develop a taste for excitement and for extravagance rather than for betterment of living conditions and for general thrift. Of course the peasantry of today in this country is not the peasantry of a subsequent generation; and home is not regarded as home in the real sense of the word, but merely as a temporary residence, not only by the laborer but by a large majority of the American population as well. When, in an individual or in a class, a genuine desire for beauty develops, art will result, although taste must first be cultivated and standards evolved. Cottage gardens are the result of long-settled conditions of living, of a desire for beauty, and of a love of home and of plants themselves. These gardens were not purchased with money, but were made of the materials at hand, and, in this respect, are therefore genuine and popular art.

Some villages in the vicinity of large cities have been rediscovered and rejuvenated by city folk, to whom village life is attractive. But such instances have frequently resulted in business and real estate booms, in the building of cheap and ugly houses and the like, or in too much prosperity of an ultra-fashionable kind; and any of these will destroy the simple character of the village. One admires the city folk who prefer village life, and wishes that many old villages, whose nearness to cities is proving their destruction, might instead be so settled; but real village life and true rural prosperity depend upon those who spend their whole lives there. If this country is ever to see again beautiful cottage homes made, as of old, by country folk, it will be only by a slow development through a period of years. Nevertheless the evidence of renewed interest in country life and the desire of city workers for simple homes in the country should be encouraged; and surely not the style of city homes but rather those of the country and of the village should dominate. It would seem that the early American colonial cottage and its garden might well be the inspiration for the design of simple country homes. An English cottage in America looks like a stranger in a strange land. A California bungalow, the type suggested by the architecture of the old Spanish Missions, is adapted to that climate and looks well only in the West and Southwest, in the conditions amid which it was born. In the East, certain types of building were produced by, or were, the result of, several factors, such as traditions from mother countries, building materials available, climate, and other conditions of environment. The architecture of the colonials was a natural evolution. Likewise today the colonial style is our tradition. We need not necessarily try to reproduce it, and, further, it is logical that the style of today should be adapted to present-day conditions. The colonists did not reproduce styles of their native countries, although they began with them as a point of departure. As this inspiration grew, the colonists created a new style. It should be noted, however, that they did not create a new style by trying to depart from their tradition. In the East we have come to associate the styles prevalent just before and just after the Revolution with village and with country life, and it is felt that any radical departure from these styles, or even the country version of them, is therefore a false note and one detrimental to success in making new small homes in the country.

But what is a cottage garden? The simple garden of the cottager has always



made a special appeal which unquestionably is the result of its individuality, of its fitness, and of its spontaneity. These characteristics are common to almost all cottage gardens, whether old or new, English or American, conceived by their owners, or built according to the dictates of the conditions and of the materials at hand, without regard to passing styles and each in a style of its own that changes only with time and with growth. An excellent description of cottage gardening is to be found in *Village Homes of England*, by Sidney R. Jones, which is quoted as follows:

Cottage gardening is a subject difficult to define or to include within certain limits. In the practice of it English villagers have always excelled. Rural occupations, indeed, have ever appealed to the national mind, and whether the consideration be of gardens that surround mansions, houses, or peasant's dwelling, the same evidence of devotion to the 'purest of human pleasures' is there. In the best of our village gardens the effects appear to be spontaneous and unstudied, and the operations of art are cunningly concealed; they seem to have grown together without the aid of man. Villagers are born gardeners. With skill they apply and adapt their knowledge acquired from nature. 'The very laborer,' said Washington Irving, 'with his thatched cottage and narrow strip of ground, attends to their embellishment. The trim hedge, the grass plot before the door, the little flower bed bordered with snug box, the woodbine trained up against the wall and hanging its blossoms about the lattice, the pot of flowers in the window, the holly, providentially planted about the house to cheat winter of its dreariness and to throw in a semblance of green to cheer the fireside: all these bespeak the influence of taste, flowing down from high sources, and pervading the lowest levels of the public mind.'

Quoting further from Mr. Jones' article on cottage gardens, apparently,

An intuitive faculty on the part of their makers gave results for the repetition of which it is impossible to lay down definite laws. The charm of many such cottage gardens, . . . . . is beyond analysis, and their attractiveness is due to the personal influence of those who have cared for them; villagers felt what was right to do, and ideas came naturally through intimate relation with the soil. That is as it should be: gardens, as houses, ought to reflect the personality of their owners. The vegetable beds, in which lay the real, material value of the cottage gardens, were tended as carefully as the plots given up to flowers. Between the narrow paths would be rows of beans, peas, cabbages, and roots, with here and there an old-fashioned fruit tree and bushes of currants and gooseberries. In shady places rhubarb flourished, and nuts were in the boundary hedge. Near the house, flowers bloomed, and their fragrance was wafted within. . . . . The entrance path was frequently paved with the handiest material the locality afforded, and many charming effects in stone, brick, and cobbles may be seen. . . . . Village gardens, too, had their clipped work in yew and box, and much of it can still be seen. . . . . The deep green of these trees (and hedges) afford excellent backgrounds for the display of flowers. Some allege that yews and box harbour insects and pests, deprive plants growing near of nutriment, and make the successful growing of flowers in close proximity an impossibility. But that cannot always be so, for flowers in such positions in cottage gardens flourish amazingly. . . . . Here flowers come and go as the seasons pass,—snowdrops, crocuses, early tulips, and violets. With the advancing season come the columbines, pinks, roses, and the brave show of summer blossoms, and autumn days are rich with fragrance. . . . . As time goes by, the old cottages and their trim gardens continue to add beauty to the countryside. The garden gates, as in

days of long ago, open on to narrow paths that lead to those ancient structures, the village homes of England, changeless objects amid a changing world.

Cottage homes in the open country rather than in villages will be discussed first, as these allow greater freedom for planning and are thus more suitable for study. In a general way, the scheme of arrangement for the main rooms of a house and for the principal outdoor areas cannot vary greatly in small homes, as the fundamental principles of arrangement necessarily remain the same insofar as the homes are used similarly, and regardless of whether they are in the city or in the country. If they are used differently, or if physical conditions change radically, as, for example, the climates of various sections, sometimes do, then plans will have to be changed accordingly and to afford the requisite convenience. Such changes, however, will, for the most part, deal only with details. Also, plans should aim to ameliorate the rigors of a climate while at the same time allowing the greatest enjoyment of life in any climate. Good planning aims to make the most of the physical conditions of any situation, as, for example, the planning for space was found very important in the arrangement of small city lots. As city lots are comparatively limited in size and usually narrower than is desirable, they are always more difficult to plan than country lots. Plans for houses should invariably be correlated with the plans for the land which is adjacent to them, under all conditions and in all situations, but in a city one must also in a measure correlate his plans and make them conform to the customs of the street and even to those of the neighborhood, and must as well, take into consideration the conditions on adjoining properties. In the open country, the nearest houses are usually too far away to require consideration. For a certainty one has greater liberty in planning a home in the country; nevertheless, in the fundamentals of planning and in the determination of the relationships between the more important elements of the scheme, he will find many helpful suggestions in the foregoing chapters.

Undoubtedly country homes afford greater liberty for planning, and furthermore, there is assurance of a greater degree of success. It is not always possible to enclose a city yard sufficiently to hide all the unsightly objects on adjoining lots; and even if surrounding homes are attractively planned, it is difficult to achieve more than a limited degree of privacy. One must start by allowing space for high and dense borders, and then time and care will be necessary for these to reach maturity and before any interesting development can be attained in the yard. In city lots one starts with no assets but rather with many handicaps, while in the country he has few if any difficulties to overcome, and if he has chosen his site carefully, he may even start with the growth of years already accomplished and with existing conditions full of interest and suggestion and only awaiting development.

In some respects one finds, in the open country, conditions quite the opposite of those in the city, and, in fact, some that even demand a reversal of some of the aforesaid principles of planning. In contrast with the closely built-up conditions in cities, the surroundings of a country lot are open. Even old woods, consisting of tall trees and with little undergrowth, such as those that have been pastured, appear open. In fact, if a lot in the country is surrounded by fields, pastures, or old woodlands, these conditions seem open in comparison with a



city environment. This openness of environment, in combination with the isolation, and even loneliness, of the country, requires a more densely planted or at least a less open yard than is desirable in the city. A low and spreading house quite surrounded by gardens, orchards, and like growth, and with tall trees overhanging the house, all unite to suggest shelter and protection. In the city one plans to obtain space and the effect of roominess, as land, and especially an ample frontage, is at a premium; but with a reversal of these conditions, however interesting may be the broad expanse of the country, it is still more interesting if seen from a snug home. A gardenlike setting for a cottage is almost essential for its best appearance, and a very much sheltered setting is equally essential for either a homelike atmosphere or a garden background.

One often finds, in descriptions of country homes, the expression 'the snug cottage.' The attractiveness of the cottage in a garden may be the result of several factors: a suitable type of house, set low on the ground; a well-planned but picturesque grouping of all buildings; a compact and convenient arrangement of all elements, without, however, the effect of being studied. Likewise necessary are an abundance of flowers, a well-stocked kitchen-garden, an orchard, high and thick hedges about the boundaries; and from without, but a glimpse of all this to be seen through a simple gateway. The cottager of long ago could not afford to waste his land, and to him a front lawn was unknown. If his cottage was not directly on the road, walls or hedges enclosed the ground between the road and the house, and this area became a garden or a grass plot. But whatever may be the best plan for the details of a cottage yard, it is generally safe to say that, after allowing sufficient space for high and dense borders, the major part of the area should be devoted to gardens, orchards, shrubberies, and the like. It is not inconsistent with such an effect, however, to allow glimpses of interesting parts of the surrounding country from suitable vantage points.

However small a country house, it is not apt to look as well if tall and narrow as it will if low and spreading in its proportions. It is possible for many styles of cottages to be very picturesque and attractive in themselves; but to appear well in their garden setting they must have a country aspect, and also must be set low on the ground. Rural homes especially should be intimately related to their surrounding gardens, and therefore the first floor of the house should be but a step above the garden level. Usually it is best to keep the first-floor level low, and also to plan a low and spreading house. The style of the house is an important factor in the appearance of the whole property, as it is very prominent. It should therefore have a native aspect, express the amplitude of the country without appearing too elaborate, and, above all, the house should seem at home in its garden.

Apparently there are no factors limiting the position of the country house except those of good planning within the lot. The position of the house will, of course, determine both the size of the areas on its several sides and also the uses of these areas. The allotment of the space desired and the convenience of the whole plan should be borne in mind while the house is being placed and its first-floor plan determined. However, as the frontages of lots in the country are generally more ample than those of city lots, there may be a great deal of latitude in the placing of the house, and, in fact, in the planning of the entire lot. Frontage on country roads, and even in villages, is not so expensive as in cities, and if

lots are purchased in the midst of farm land, the farmer usually prefers for his convenience in farming in the surrounding fields, to sell a long frontage with a shallow depth, rather than the reverse. For a certainty, lots of ample frontage are more desirable than those that are narrow and deep, for they are better adapted to practical and attractive development. And, after all, why go to the country and still live on a narrow lot? If for a cottage home a lot of ample frontage may be assumed, then with this greater latitude for location, the desirability of a low-spreading house, will be evident.

If lots are chosen along or near good roads, for reasons of accessibility, high hedges and heavy border plantings will be necessary to exclude the noise and the dust incident to modern traffic, and may at the same time serve to relate the house less to the road and more to the grounds within. High hedges along the roadway, as well as about the greater part of the boundaries, will contribute much to the desired character of the cottage home; but usually one need not hesitate to place his house where he prefers. He may even turn it endwise, or in fact at any angle to the road. In short, there does not appear to be any exterior condition that limits or in any way particularly affects the ground plans of isolated properties, unless it be that of fine distant views.

However, it should be noted that to face a building precisely at right angles to a particular line of view is likely to result in an appearance of conventionality, which is altogether unsuitable for a cottage garden. Furthermore, in a boundary hedge, apertures which are directly opposite the sides of a house, that is, in an axial relation, make a yard appear more open than if they are in an oblique relation. An exposed effect is apt to result from too many apertures in the hedges, and furthermore they interrupt the interior scenery. From the windows of a cottage, a single glimpse of the country beyond one's boundaries is usually sufficient. Walks may lead from the house to points in the yard or along the boundaries whence the country may be seen to best advantage, and at times it may seem worth while to devote one whole side of a cottage to these distant outlooks. A pleasing distant prospect, advantageously framed by a narrow aperture in the boundary hedge, will ordinarily be more interesting than a view of wide expanse. However carefully planned, if the view is apparently incidental, it is less obvious and therefore contributes to the unstudied effect of the scheme. Hence, it does not appear that cottages need be turned to any precise angle with respect to the lines of view; in fact, the more incidental relation of the cottage to possible views is thought to present those views more interestingly; moreover, the necessity for openings directly opposite the sides of the cottage is thereby obviated, and the enclosed and sheltered effect within is preserved. Thus it is evident that the plans for rural homes are concerned mainly with conditions within their boundaries.

Frequently a cottage set near the highway, even in a corner near one of the side boundaries is the most accessible to the road, as well as allowing the most advantageous and desirable division of the space within. Whether or not a cottage is much in evidence from the highway, it is usually best to place it nearer to the road than to the rear boundary, for reasons of accessibility and because the quieter area in the rear of the cottage will then be larger. The space between the road and the cottage may be interestingly treated, whether hedged or open to view from the road, and in spite of the fact that the face of the building



may be at an angle to the road rather than parallel with it. However, this discussion of the cottage home is not intended to imply that principles for its planning may be laid down with the same definiteness as were the rules governing the planning of city homes. In fact, quite the contrary is true, for in the country one is freer to make the most of his situation and to indulge his own taste. It may be possible for one to generalize in a description of the cottage home, but principles for its planning must consist largely of exceptions to statements in the foregoing chapters. In general, it may be said that all that contributes to the suitable character of the property is good. But every situation and every example must be a law unto itself.

A garage and the other necessary small buildings should be connected with the house, in order to be accessible and convenient. Whether under the same roof as the house, or merely connected with it by means of architectural features, such as fences, arbors, or sheltered walks, the grouping of outbuildings and their connection with the house may be made very attractive. Roof lines may be drawn out to cover one-story appendages, and the long, horizontal lines of a house may thus be effectively emphasized. Moreover, outbuildings may be more or less connected and arranged to surround a courtyard, with a covered passage through them or with an arbor around their outside. The necessary activities within the house and in the yard should be simplified, whether or not one expects to keep numerous help, and the outbuildings required for supplies, water, or lighting equipment, workshop, garage, or livestock should all be closely related to the house. It should not be necessary to go outdoors in the performance of household duties. The garage, especially, should have a direct connection with the house. Many old farm houses in the East have interesting arrangements of their sheds and other outbuildings, but the arrangement of these structures about a courtyard is peculiar to the South and to southern countries. In hot climates, stone-paved courtyards, with or without arbors, are the scene of many household activities, and are also attractive as architectural features. In connection with a cottage home, its usefulness justifies the existence of a courtyard. The cottage, with all its necessary structures, should combine to form an interesting and picturesque group. If the general scheme here suggested for the buildings is followed, and if they are located near the public road, it will be possible to place the garage at the edge of, or very near, the highway, thereby saving road area as well as escaping the difficulty usually caused by the heavy snows in the northern section of the country.

The important outdoor features to be accommodated in the cottage property are: gardens for flowers, gardens for vegetables, or gardens combining flowers with fruits and vegetables, a small lawn, a service area, and possibly orchards and meadows. The arrangement of these principal outdoor areas and the plan for the first floor of the cottage are quite interdependent, but as a rule there are no exterior conditions that limit the formulation of general plans. In short, one is without restrictions, and may make the most of the conditions to be found on any particular lot; and, however he may interpret these in the light of his own ideas, the result will be as good as it is pleasing and practical. If a high and dense border is made along the highway, the presence of the road does not affect the arrangement. Therefore, a garden or a lawn, or even an orchard, may as well occupy the space ordinarily called the front yard, because there is no area corresponding

to the front yard of city properties. An entrance walk may have to traverse it; but an entrance under old apple trees, or one opening upon a small grass court through a gateway in the hedge, or an approach through a hedged or flower-bordered garden walk, may be made very charming. In any case, the entrance walk may be given a fitting introduction to a cottage home.

There are no conditions which demand a definite use for the area adjacent to the road. In any part of a cottage yard one should find a picture of simple country life, though not without evidences of comfort and plenty. Apparently there are no conventions governing the assignment of area on any side of a cottage, although one may prefer the sunny sides for some purposes and shady sides for others. The conditions already existing in any particular area may suggest its uses. For a certainty, interesting bits of rustic scenery, as, for instance, small brooks or springs, fine old trees, and the like should be given prominence. A very fine tree may well be the dominant feature of a lot and determine the entire scheme. A new house cleverly placed with relation to an old tree, will be greatly enhanced thereby, as it will receive an appearance of age and a homelike atmosphere. Old trees of any kind are decidedly an asset, and unless there is an abundance of them, a plan should carefully relate the house or arrange the yard so as to take advantage of their presence. Of course, also, one must know when it is best to remove trees for the good of those remaining or to obtain the best results for the whole scheme. Some trees will look best near or overhanging a house, and others in an orchard or in a small meadow; and nut trees or old fruit trees are not only of value for what they bear, but are especially desirable by reason of their character—so suitable to a cottage. An old apple tree or cherry tree should be prized for its blossoms and the type of its beauty, whether or not its fruit is good. So the existing growth on a property may be an important factor in the location of and plan of a cottage or in determining the best location for gardens, lawns, or other features.

A spring or a stream may be left as it is or its natural beauty enhanced by the addition of plants thriving in or near water. As a feature, running water is an asset and should not be destroyed, but rather incorporated in the scheme, and, if in any way changed it should be enhanced. In fact, the natural contour of the entire lot, if it has been carefully selected, may to a large extent be used as it was found. Thus in this respect as well, a plan for a house and yard should be conceived with a view to making the most of the original contours. In a meadow, the natural roll of the land may be more suitable than it is possible to make in a new grade, but to say the least, great expense is saved if any portion of the land can be used as it is found. Of course, if a cottage is placed on sloping ground, it is better to plan the gardens and the lawn above and meadows or orchards below, as the grade of the former should be more nearly that of the cottage. It is not wise to cut or fill about growth which is to be saved. Upon the amount of cutting or filling, and the hardiness of the trees, will depend the degree of damage done them and the results. But to fill about old trees sufficiently to cover the base of their trunks as they spread into their roots and into the ground is to destroy their natural aspect and much of their beauty. Small lawns must be comparatively flat to be serviceable, and gardens likewise usually are made on one level or on several levels; and if the contour of the ground is not suitable in the areas where gardens and lawns seemingly must go, then grading must be re-



sorted to. In some instances, very interesting gardens have been made upon very uneven ground. Rocky outcrops and very stony ground have at times been selected for cottage sites, as these are not good for farming, and, on the other hand, offer possibilities for very picturesque cottage settings. All of such natural advantages should be cleverly turned to good purpose. The characteristics of a situation are the factors which make for individuality in the result. Both time and money is saved if one takes the utmost advantage of original conditions—trees, native shrubbery, streams, rocky outcrops, and the shape of the land. A scheme thus based upon and even developing the conditions at hand, has an air of simplicity. In view of the liberty with which one may plan such country homes, that their plans should carefully be fitted to original conditions would seem both possible and highly desirable.

It does seem vain indeed to attempt a description or an analysis of cottage gardens. Writers gifted with the ability and genius to paint word pictures might describe individual gardens, but the charm of the gardens has been said to lie in their individuality, and therefore, however inspiring such descriptions might be, new gardens could not be patterned after them. What, then, may one say of these gardens, beyond a few generalizations? It already has been stated that they should appear to dominate the cottage, that they should be intimately related to it in elevation, and that beyond this there are few if any restrictions. Many old-world cottage gardens were situated between the house and the road, usually behind high walls and hedges or within lower, but none the less effective, barriers. These have been called "dooryard gardens." This position was not an uncommon one for cottage gardens in this country, and in fact one may still see examples. If, in this area, considerable isolation is not possible, this location is not a suitable one for the garden; but the question of its enclosure appears to be the only restriction upon this use of the front yard. The extent of the area on this or the other sides of the cottage is not of any moment so long as the entire space in gardens does not appear small in proportion to the size of the lot. The gardens may be fitted into any odd angles or spaces, but a sufficient amount of the garden element is an important factor in the success of the entire scheme.

Gardens must be relied on, in a large measure, to furnish the home setting. The space between the building and the lot lines, on two or three sides, may not actually represent a great extent of area; but gardens on the several sides of the cottage, even if confined entirely to these areas, may require more care than can conveniently be given them. If the cottage is at some distance from one boundary, hedges may be used to enclose a space sufficient for garden purposes, leaving the remainder of the area free for other uses. But it is important to devise some means of obtaining a gardenlike and flowering effect and one which will be somewhat permanent and which will require the least amount of care. Flowering and fruiting woody plants should be scattered liberally through the flower beds. Vines on quaint trellises and not only deciduous flowering shrubs but also evergreens should be used. Evergreens should be trimmed occasionally to prevent their growing too large, and the trimming will give them a horticultural and gardened aspect. In the winter, the greens and the cheerful color of the berries on shrubs and vines will indeed be appreciated. Strong-growing herbaceous plants may likewise be selected for those plots, as their hardy and spreading habits will not crowd out the shrubs and such plots will require but little care. The

use of tall-growing plants, of any kind though preferably of woody growth, is quite to be desired, especially if they do not, by reason of their numbers, closely crowd the house. The pattern of the garden need not be evident, and if it must be explored to be really seen, the garden will be all the more interesting.

It is not considered necessary for rural gardens to appear perfectly dressed throughout their entire extent. If, immediately about the doorways, there is evidence of trimness and careful cultivation, an overgrown effect in the more remote corners should not be detrimental. The neglect apparent in dead and sickly plants, however, is to be distinctly differentiated from the appearance of a corner of flourishing anemones or lemon lilies, which seemingly thrive best when undisturbed in their favorite situations. If the owner of a cottage garden is a true lover of plants, he will insist on having a considerable area devoted to gardens, and in such gardens he may well plant, if he wishes, a considerable collection. Tall-growing shrubs and small trees which do not submit gracefully to shearing may be incorporated in the hedges. Most shrubs do best when not crowded by others, as thus they are free to assume a more beautiful form and to flower and to fruit more profusely. One can readily imagine the amount of space which could be filled by even a restricted collection of flowering shrubs and evergreens, especially if allowance were made for the future spreading of these shrubs and for the planting of some herbaceous plants among them. A great variety of plants does not seem to be out of character with country gardens, but the flourishing condition of each plant is essential to the cheerful and thriving appearance of the garden. With high hedges and a plentiful use of woody plants, the gardens will afford all conditions of exposure, sun, and shade; and it remains only for one to select carefully the proper situation for the native wild flowers, for the various bulbs, and for the cultivated garden flowers, all according to their preference for shade or sunlight. The well-known garden flowers, such as delphiniums, phlox, asters, and especially the biennials,—including foxgloves and campanulas, are essential to a garden and yet require more care than others. Therefore they may be used near the house, where, if less in quantity, their effect will be greater. It is possible, however, to have enough of the garden element to dominate the situation without inconveniencing oneself for its maintenance.

The enemy of high hedges should realize that with such protection for gardens, orchards, or even meadows, many plants may be successfully grown which are not sufficiently hardy to endure the open. Not only will all plants grow far better in an enclosed garden, but a surprising number of plants unknown to a locality, and also perhaps many exotics which the lover of plants has collected in other parts, may be grown successfully in a well-enclosed garden. In an exposed location in the open country, considerable protection is needed for comfort and also for ordinary success in gardening.

The term *high hedge* means one from ten feet high to the height of most trees. Considerable width must be allowed for a high hedge, not only for the healthy condition of the tall-growing shrubs and trees which compose it, but also to allow the development of sufficient density. A wealth of interesting vegetation may be grown in large hedges and perhaps nowhere else in a small yard. Much evergreen material is desirable, and trees like the hemlock, which will bear crowding and still retain their lower branches, should be selected. Moreover, many berry-bearing shrubs and trees, such as the barberry, the mountain ash, the tall



viburnums, and the like, will thrive in a crowded hedgerow, where the hemlock and the other evergreens will furnish an ideal background for the color of the dogwood and of the other spring flowers and fall fruit. Bittersweet and other fruiting vines may ramble over the hedges, draping and decorating them with varied effects during the passing seasons. Even if one begrudges ten or fifteen feet of width for boundary hedges, the birds will appreciate them. In the open country, an enclosed cottage garden becomes a veritable sanctuary for birdlife.

If, for hedges, those plants are selected which do not root too vigorously, no trouble will be found in growing other plants close to them. Of course it is necessary to provide plenty of good soil for the hedge as well as for the plants of the garden, else the hedges will extend their roots to the garden. Paths are desirable along all hedges, especially while the hedges are young, as better light is thus afforded their lower branches and density is encouraged where it is most needed. Furthermore, such paths will allow space into which the hedge may spread, and since all plants have strict limits concerning the width required for any height, the hedges cannot be trimmed too narrow, lest the lower branches die. Interior hedges need not be so high, of course, depending only on the effects desired. But in every respect, the effective barrier seems essential.

It is evident that some pavement must be provided about the house from which it is possible to enjoy the gardens. Adjoining this pavement, the gardens may be somewhat lower-growing and, perhaps, better dressed. It is not considered necessary, however, or in most cases even desirable, to have the garden walks related in any conventional manner to this pavement, which is usually on the same level as the garden. Nevertheless, there will always be exceptions, and at times it may be desirable to have more openness through the garden on the axis of the house. It cannot be definitely affirmed that regularity of the paths or of the size or shape of garden plots is either good or bad, as that which is suitable depends entirely on the conditions governing each situation. Irregularity of the paths and a decided variation in the size of the plots will in many cases look best and also be more convenient for the arrangement of the plants. Some old gardens look as though the plants had been arranged first and the paths subsequently arranged about them. Some plants do best in large masses, and others, with a tendency to spread and become a nuisance, may be more easily confined in small plots that are circumscribed by paths. Sometimes greater interest may be afforded small garden areas if, because of the irregularity of the walks, but little of the garden is at any one time disclosed. Walks may be grassed, sanded, gravelled, or even paved in some manner. The surface should not appear to be expensive, but should be unostentatious and made of local material. The necessity for pavement is felt to exist principally near the cottage; and while any pavement should have a simple aspect, it should also be practical for the uses for which it is primarily intended.

Lawns of ample dimensions do not seem to be necessary for small homes in the country. Children will always prefer to play in the fields and woods, where they may be free from restraint and where there is likewise ample freedom for the exercise of their imagination. A modest home in the country may comprise sufficient land for a small orchard or a meadow, or even for both, and this will furnish the necessary playground and one far better than a lawn. With open land all about, the need for an expression of spaciousness within the limits of the

home is not felt. Some small area in good turf is a pretty feature and is ordinarily considered useful. The bordering hedges alone may surround it, or it may be given a gardenlike aspect by means of flowers against the hedges. Small lawns may combine open turf areas with areas of flowers, thus providing that which is necessary for a lawn and gardens while at the same time reducing the size of the area requiring careful maintenance. To be useful, however, a turf plot should be as level as possible; and no more turf should be included than can be thoroughly prepared and beautifully maintained. A small lawn should not be unkempt; but if well cared for, it may be very much of a decoration.

A considerable extent of land is never undesirable and at times may be very advantageous. Interesting bits of scenery are desirable acquisitions, and at times the interesting features that one may want to include in his purchase do not lie so near as to be included in as small a parcel of land. However, if several acres are purchased, it is not wise to plan extensive gardens and lawns about the house, as the effect which is sought is more consistent with a small than with a large area. With larger lots, one may well devote the space in excess of that needed for the pleasure ground and the service area, to an orchard and a meadow. Small bits of woodland should be allowed to remain in their natural condition and should be devoted to native plants.

A small orchard is an attractive as well as a useful feature, and furthermore, it is equally attractive and useful even when it is not as carefully maintained as a lawn must be. Likewise it is desirable to include in one's small domain a bit of meadow, especially if it contains fine trees. Somewhere about every country home there should be a variety of nut trees, and while these may be used for shade trees about the house or in the service court, a meadow affords space for more of them and for a greater variety. If orchards or meadows are extensive, or if they are not provided with hedges like those of the gardens, then, near the house, large groups of tall shrubs or massive trees should be so arranged as to permit satisfactory outlooks into these more open parts of the property. However, the effect of too much openness about the house is undesirable. It is unimportant how the ground of these areas lies with respect to the level of the house. Views will be equally interesting if the grade of the surrounding areas is considerably lower, and when this is the case it is easier to drain the gardens and to provide good drainage for the house. But in planning a cottage and its setting, it matters little whether the grounds are very limited, or are more extensive and include an orchard and a meadow. Orchards and meadows are not essential to a cottage setting, as the rural outlook is generally attractive, whether it includes one's own or a neighbor's land.

The relation of a rural property to the country round about with respect to views might furnish material for considerable difference of opinion. Many persons will say, "Why go to the country and then hedge yourself in?" Those persons who prefer to live on a hilltop and to command an uninterrupted sweep of the horizon will never know the appeal of the intimacy and charm which it is possible to create under some such conditions as have already been described. Those who prefer the hilltop home find it difficult to appreciate the interest and picturesqueness of vistas and restricted views, as compared with an uninterrupted panorama. Limited views of the country through openings in the boundary plantings may very likely be pleasing, although there is some difference of opinion



in this matter. If one lives in the country all the year around, he is likely to become less sensible to the beauty of the country. For most city folk having summer or year-round homes in the country, some opportunity for glimpses of rural landscapes is probably desirable, however. And, if the necessary openings do not make the whole scheme too open, such views contribute greatly to the interest of the home. It may be better to have the views apparently merely accidental rather than on axial relations with windows and doors, and in the garden hedges, of course, one should never make breaches to provide for views from the house. If in any quarter the views are more important than the gardens, then the gardens should have been placed elsewhere in the beginning. Or perhaps, in some such cases, walks may lead through gateways in the hedges to points without, and through these the scenery may be enjoyed.

Much might be said of details which are particularly suitable to homes of this character. Architectural details, such as walls, fences, gates, trellises and paving patterns of the walks, all contribute greatly to the atmosphere of a place, if they are well-conceived and cleverly made. Likewise, a nice selection of the kinds of plants for all situations is equally important. For example, old apple or other fruit trees of interesting character, and walnut or hickory trees, all of which may be useful as well as beautiful, are more suitable for shade trees near the house than are fancy varieties of shade trees or even native trees useful only for their shade. A majority of the plants of foreign aspect, such as the effect produced by an almost exclusive use of fancy evergreens, will suggest city gardens rather than a country home and will also look too studied. The decorative value of appropriate plants and also that of interesting architectural details is needed and is very important in establishing the desired character of country homes. But neither the planting nor the architectural details should be elaborate or appear costly, though they should be apparently useful. If they can be clever and yet look "homemade" they will very likely be good.

When a walk is to be made, one should consider the way in which it is to be used, and with this point of view decide whether it should have grass, gravel, brick, or stone paving. If it is to be an important walk and to be used in all weather, material should be selected which will afford dry walking, ease in shovelling snow, and, in short, be practical for its intended use. If it is merely a garden walk, less effort will be necessary in its construction. If paving is to be used, local material will be in better taste than some kind which is unusual and apparently imported from a distance. If, on the property, there happens to be any old building material, such as used brick, stone, or the like, this may be advantageously used, especially if laid in some interesting pattern; and it will also make a serviceable walk, which will bear witness to both the economy and the art impulse of the maker. Old material is always interesting, as age and use have worn away the harshness of its line and color. The evidence of the handiwork of the owner makes an appeal, as the personal and individual aspect of a garden is thereby increased. But to expect an owner to be his own carpenter, blacksmith, mason, and gardener, is demanding a great deal. In the days of craftsmen, work of this kind was easily obtained in all the country villages. Now, skilled laborers have lost most of their individuality, and men are machines rather than craftsmen. However, if one has seen interesting details of simple design, is able to draw them, or can obtain the designs from books or from other

sources,—then of course he can have made attractive walks, gateways, garden trellises, and many other details which contribute in a large measure toward the success of a cottage garden. It must be admitted, that the design of such detail is most difficult. However, to some extent it is necessary.

In the preceding attempt at an analysis of the cottage home, which is, after all, but an assumed type, the aim has been primarily to show the *independence of planning* possible under such conditions, and also to picture the *character*, or total effect, which may result in the finished product. Necessarily many statements have been made which may lead one to the conclusion that, after all, cottage gardens are not such erratic, vague, and indefinable productions of man as they might at first appear. If, however, these descriptions have made a somewhat clarified picture in the mind of the reader, it is because the details and examples used have been assumed to be common to most gardens of this character. It should be realized that actually one cannot make such an assumption. Analysis of details may contribute toward the clarity of the general picture. Generalizations may recall to the reader similar things he has seen, which will also add their touch to the picture. Contrasts with homes which are quite unlike may check one who has moved to a totally new and different environment from repeating that which he has become accustomed to in the old. But for that which is actually completed probably no rules can be made.

A cottage garden, to be most beautiful, must be the result of a truly artistic impulse. Nevertheless, many have been made, and may still be made, which, while not as beautiful as they might be, are still interesting in some degree. That they shall be interesting to their owners is, of course, most important. One should not expect to produce satisfactory results in a short time, as time is, and always has been, an important factor in their making. It may be possible for one to purchase an idea from an artist, to engage skilled men and to spare no expense to obtain the effect of age at the beginning, and to engage the services of a skilled gardener to care for it and to mould it as it grows. But this would be mere "nature faking," and while such gardens may be interesting, and such an appreciation of simple beauty very meritorious, still, if it were possible, one would prefer to see such simple homes become common and therefore the expression of the individual. Perhaps this hope is too ideal and dependent on too many conditions that are non-existent today,—among which the most sadly wanting are good architectural models and the carpenter-architect of taste and genius who lived a hundred years ago. Some old houses may be copied and successfully adapted to new situations; but as a rule, it will even be hard to find an architect gifted not only with the skill but also with the sympathy and the understanding necessary for the handling of such difficult and unprofitable problems. But the answer to all these difficulties, is improvement of public taste, of the coming of which there is every assurance. It matters little how we achieve better living conditions, but as they are necessary to our comfort,—both our convenience and our pleasure,—we are likely, by some means, to obtain them. If there is a genuine desire, and especially if this is community or a country wide desire, it is safe to assume it will be realized.

Conditions in villages vary markedly. In some villages the lots are narrow, and, worse yet, the new houses are copied from the poorest models of the city! The lots in some villages grow more and more narrow as the distance from the



center of the town increases. This may be the result of building the houses along the main roads only, and perhaps, with the thought of saving footsteps to the village stores. But it would be better to subdivide the farm land between the main roads and thus accommodate many homes within but a short distance of the village center. No doubt the cost of frontage in villages seems as high to the villagers as does the cost of city frontage to those who live in cities or in suburbs. Nevertheless, in most villages in this country the average lot width is sufficiently ample for interesting developments of the yard. And if the frontages are not as wide as might be desired, the lots are at least apt to be deeper than most city lots; and while space in this relation to the house, may not be so advantageous as if at the side, in village lots this may prove a more convenient arrangement. Villages in this country are rarely as closely built up as those in old European towns, or as our American cities. Furthermore, village houses either are, or at least should be, lower than the average city house. Therefore, after one has set aside the space necessary for service courts and a small lawn, the remainder, and the *greater* part, of the yard may well be made into gardens of some kind.

There should be a reasonable relation between house plan and the yard plan, but very likely the conditions in villages are seldom so limiting. If it is possible to conceive of schemes for village homes as combining both city and country characteristics, and if one is free to select ideas and adapt principles from the rules governing either of these conditions, according as his individual problem may require, he should encounter little difficulty in the planning of his property. Some village lots are so restricted that builders are obliged to conform to conditions as strict as those prevalent in cities, both in the size of the area purchased and in respect to the proximity of the dwellings on adjoining lots. In other cases, where wider frontages prevail, houses may be scattered and be small and low,—all factors making for an environment very similar to that of the open country.

There are plenty of interesting examples of village homes in the old towns of the East, and while their original gardens have seldom been preserved, a suggestion of their former glory sometimes lingers. Among these examples are to be found many plans which differ widely. Sometimes the houses are placed directly on the sidewalk; and, depending on the width of the lots, either the houses extend across the entire frontage, or sideyard space is left for gardens. There are examples of corner lots with the house directly on the sidewalks of both streets. These plans are very economical in the use of space. By this arrangement, the front door of the house may be on the main street, while the doors to the kitchen and sheds may face on the side street; the yard space then remains unbroken, and a small lawn for the laundry and the play-yard may adjoin the kitchen in the rear, leaving the greater part of the yard for gardens. The gardens in these village homes frequently extend to the street fences, and thus contribute greatly to the character of the village streets. When many tall-growing plants are used, one cannot actually see far into the gardens, and thus for the dooryards at the side, which adjoin the living rooms, and for the greater part of the gardens, there is sufficient privacy. However, privacy in village homes is not as important a factor as it is in city homes.

There are other examples of houses set back from the street; and frequently,

in such cases, gardens occupy the entire front yard; in other cases, flowers are used only to border the entrance walk or in groups against the house, the remainder of the yard being lawn. Other attractive front yards are found to be very like those described as suitable for suburban homes. On some village streets there is no adherence to a building line, and the varied fronts of the lots produce a decidedly picturesque effect, quite suitable, at times, for a village. Sometimes the more pretentious village houses have fronts of markedly symmetrical design; and frequently these houses are situated midway across their lot widths, and with very good effect. Also there are numerous examples of gardens made in the form of borders flanking long straight walks—walks which at times are related to doors or windows and which at other times are apparently laid without regard to the house. While most houses exemplify plans laid out on straight lines parallel with the lot boundaries, a few are found with plans of no regularity whatever.

The attractiveness of these village homes lies, in fact, in the variable nature of their plans. Any attempt to analyze them is as futile as the effort to set forth rules for country cottages. But we are fully aware of the appeal of these village homes. Those which remain in a good state of preservation—and even those merely suggesting their original condition—display sufficient evidence to prove this true. In the villages, the situation is quite the same as that in the country: city restrictions hold only with respect to the utilization of space and in the essential relations between the main indoor and the outdoor features. The effect of openness, so essential to city lots, does not seem necessary in small villages. The whole village is the children's playground, and vacant lots abound as well as nearby open country. Also, in contrast with life in a city, village life is more that of a community. Then, after all is said and done, when one may plan unhampered by restrictions, his prime object should be a village home in a garden setting.









Chap VI

## LANDSCAPE PLANNING FOR SMALL HOMES

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E. GORTON DAVIS  
DEPARTMENT OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE  
COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE, CORNELL UNIVERSITY  
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## CHAPTER VI

### ARRANGEMENT OF A FARMSTEAD

A farmhouse and its yard may not be planned as a residence alone, as is the case of the other properties so far discussed. A farm is a home and a business combined. It is therefore seldom possible to think of and to plan the activities of the home life as separate from the work of the farm. The farmhouse should be centrally located on the farm, whether immediately on a public road or back within the farm lands; and about the house as a center should be grouped the farm work-buildings, the yards for fowls and the paddocks for stock, the vegetable gardens, the small orchards, and, in fact, all things that require close care, whether they relate to the farm produce or to the home supply. The livestock paddocks and the most-used areas on the farm will have to be near the house to be convenient. Can farmsteads, then, be planned to be practical and convenient, and still be attractive as homes?

An orderly arrangement of buildings and areas is always the most convenient one, and this arrangement is in itself good looking and most easily kept neat. The farm buildings usually represent an even larger valuation than the farmer's house, and therefore it is good business policy to keep them in repair. A compact group of well-kept farm buildings in close proximity to the house may be very attractive. For the sake of the outlook from the house it is better to have the paddocks on the far sides of the barns; but to give paddocks the protection desirable for them, and also to place them out of sight from the house, and to the leeward, that unpleasant odors may cause no annoyance, may require more rearrangement of house and barns than is possible if these buildings are already established. Practical and convenient plans for farm buildings and their adjacent areas will unquestionably derive some degree of attractiveness from their orderly arrangement; but for any farm there is usually possible more than one practical arrangement, one which is both practical and which will present a good appearance both from the house and from the road.

The importance of careful planning in any project or business is usually considered necessary for the achievement of satisfactory profits; and the orderliness generally accompanying successful farming or other well-organized enterprises, has, no doubt, likewise been observed. But from the point of view of the home itself, the possibility of pleasant living conditions should not be disregarded. Attractive settings for home life are important in the country as well as in the city, and the opportunities in the country are greater. When one lives long amid pleasant surroundings, he realizes the value of their influence, and becomes convinced that such inspiration is needed for his work and for his rest. In the home, it would seem, should start the real development of the country. Home life must be wholesome, full of opportunity, and attractive, in order to sustain interest and make successful a business enterprise in the country. Outward signs in villages and on farms in a large measure indicate whether thriving and contented conditions exist in the life of the families and of the community. Well-cultivated farm lands always look well, but the yards about the farmhouses require some

care and well deserve it. Farm homes should not strive to look like city homes, in order to appear prosperous or attractive, nor will they if their owners are true exponents of country life.

Farmhouses with a tendency to be low and spreading look better than those built tall. Generous porches will add to the appearance of lowness. The style of old farmhouses commonly called "colonial" is appropriate for the country, and, with some modification to adapt it to the convenience of modern houses, this type is advocated. It is simple, appears substantial, and is without ornament except, perhaps, for such details as are essentially a part of its construction. Needless and showy ornament has no place about a farmhouse. If one thinks he can afford to ornament his farmhouse, let his means be shown in better mouldings about the eaves, in better posts for his porches, and in well-designed doorways. The woodwork, inside and out, of many old farmhouses is better than can be bought nowadays from stock, and it is frequently bought and highly prized by city folk. When repaired and painted, this wood is as good as new and better seasoned. But farmhouses may be effectively decorated only by the improvement of their essential details. Simple and comfortable houses, painted inside and out in the conventional white, look far better than do fancy imitations of cheap city houses, gaudy with many colors without and glistening with varnish within. A countrylike house for the country is a good beginning and an important one.

The best of houses appears to a disadvantage if standing in an open and exposed situation, at the mercy of summer sun and winter blasts. Both the necessary activities about the house and the recreation in the yard are afforded greater convenience and comfort if sheltered to a reasonable degree by windbreaks, orchards, and carefully placed shade trees. The tree growth necessary for protection is usually sufficient to furnish a house with the setting essential to its good appearance. Additional trees, shrubs, and flowers, well arranged to make an attractive and livable yard, will, no doubt, contribute in an even greater degree to the beauty of the farm home and of all that is a part thereof. A great deal of planting is not necessary to make a good-looking yard, and, as in the case of the house, simplicity should be the keynote of the yard.

Farm home grounds should be planned to require but little care. The care of the yard is no such diversion to the farmer as is gardening to the city man; further, a yard will need the most care when other farm work is most pressing and when working hours are necessarily long. Some gardening in the open air may at times be pleasant to the farmer's wife, but this should not be so arduous as to constitute an extra burden for her. Therefore, to begin with, the total space of the rural yard should not be greater than can easily be well kept. The planting should consist largely of trees—low-branching where they are to serve as backgrounds and windbreaks, and tall where only their shade is required. There is usually plenty of latitude for the selection of shrubs desirable for their flowers and fruit; but, except for a few bushes about the house, shrubbery should be massed against the trees along the borders rather than scattered about, in order to keep the lawns clear and open and also to contribute to the density of the background. It must be remembered that for the greater part of the open season the shrubs will have no flowers, but that if they have showy fruit this will appear advantageously against the background. Open lawns with a few fine shade trees may be mown more easily than those



covered with scattered clumps of bushes, and the "tree and lawn" scenery will look more fitting in that it is more countrylike.

The home grounds are likely to be rectilinear in shape, as the surrounding fields and orchards must be thus to be practical. So far as the yard is concerned, its outline is of little importance. Unless the slope from the road to the house is very steep or irregular, the road should be laid out on a line paralleling the house or the division fences, and it should be kept to one side of the yard, preferably that of the kitchen and working rooms, and should continue straight to the barnyard and outbuildings in the rear. Roads should always follow the fence lines and should not cut either fields or lawns into irregular areas. Walks should be direct, with their lines determined by the routes most travelled.

The parallelism of the walks with the lines of the house, of the road, or of the fences is of less importance, however, on the farmstead. They are business routes rather than the pleasure walks of a city garden; and if there is good reason for their direction, and if they are not raised too high above the level of the ground, they will look well. If the house has its work rooms on the side toward the entrance road, these walks will not need to cut across the lawn in order to furnish ready access to the farm buildings. Hence the natural result will be an unbroken lawn in front and on the side away from the road, with plantings mainly along the fences and massed,—a very simple and easily kept yard.

While nowadays it is easy for farmer folk to reach the village or a nearby city for their recreation, nevertheless the greater part of their time must be spent at home, and it would be better if the homes were so attractive as, of themselves, to afford satisfactory recreation. Of course an attractive yard is of first importance as a proper setting for home life, especially in its refining and educating influence on the children. Hence it is worth while to develop a yard which will look more than merely passing well. To begin at the house, the doors as well as the windows should open on to the lawn. Porches overlooking this area will have a pleasant prospect and may be used for work and for occasions when one does not wish to sit in the front of the house. New houses should be built low on the ground, especially on the lawn side, as the fewer the steps between the ground and the first floor, the more easy will be the access to the out-of-doors. Many persons enjoy that part of the yard which is nearest the house and most seen from its windows, provided the trees and shrubs have been so arranged as to make it somewhat enclosed. In fact, a side yard may be made decidedly gardenlike with a good background of trees, shrubs in occasional recesses, and here and there flowers, grouped in quantities depending on the time one is willing to devote to them. If a side yard is not wholly open to view from the public road, it may well be given a somewhat gardenesque treatment, thus affording both a pleasant place in which to sit outdoors and an agreeable outlook from the house. If it is easily accessible from the house and interesting and appealing in its appearance, both the indoor and the outdoor life of the home will be made more pleasant. A home should be enjoyed, but it must first be made attractive.

Usually from every farmhouse there are some more distant outlooks which are of particular interest. Also, as there is much of interest passing on the highway, a more or less unobstructed view of the road is desirable. There may be objects on one's own farm, or on adjoining farms, which are uninteresting or are even unsightly; but with these notations in mind, one should so dispose the trees in

groups or in masses or in a hedgerow as to permit an outlook where it is desirable, and to hide the uninteresting, or perhaps unsightly, objects; and, if possible, also plant windbreaks only in that quarter where the view of the surrounding country is the least interesting. One may wish to have an enclosed part of the yard either at the side, the back, or perhaps even toward the front of the house. At the same time, interesting distant outlooks may also lie in the same line of sight from the house as does the enclosed yard or garden. Of course one cannot look at a garden and at a distant view at the same time and fully enjoy each. Moreover, as one already has the view to start with, why not make the garden somewhere else in order to increase the number of interesting outlooks from the house? The garden too is spoiled if left open, as is necessary if distant views are to be arranged for across it. A desirable garden must be enclosed, or at least convey a sense of that privacy which is achieved by enclosure. A distant view appears surprisingly more interesting when a heavy border is planted on either side of it, just as a suitable frame enhances a picture. And considering the view, with its flanking masses of trees, as a framed picture, it should be remembered that the frame should not be particularly noticeable; hence the vegetation about these openings in a border should not be such as will be more prominent than is the scene in the distance which it is intended to frame.

The point of view from which one should do most of his planning is the house. Ordinarily, the house is already built and the farm buildings more or less fixed as to position and uses. Furthermore, in some cases the buildings, necessarily the most important elements of a plan, are so arranged as to make an ideal development very difficult. However, in accordance with some definite ideal, it is generally possible to somewhat ameliorate a few of these unfortunate conditions, and to plan for further improvement at some future time. Also, under most conditions, however unfavorable, it is possible to satisfy the essentials as to shelter and reasonable attractiveness of setting for a house. There are few farmhouses indeed which, by the use of a few fine trees, carefully disposed, cannot be made to look like homes. If it is not possible to arrange for gardens and shrubberies within close view of the house, they may be equally interesting in a different aspect, even though necessarily more distant and not plainly seen from the house windows, or at least not so near as to be easily accessible. In choosing the plants for the yard, it has already been suggested that trees should be predominant. They are necessary for a satisfactory windbreak, and their height and size is likewise necessary to make for scenery in the yard which is in scale and also in character with the surrounding landscape. It is highly desirable, also, to use many evergreens. Although they are not so suitable for shade as are some of the tall-growing and more spreading deciduous trees, in the borders evergreens are indispensable, and in winter they are both effective and cheerful. No foliage is the equal of the hemlock in color, in value, or in fine texture. Pines are interesting in themselves and some will grow faster than hemlocks, but as they get old their habits of growth are somewhat open and thus they do not in the end make as effective windbreaks as do the more dense-growing trees, unless perhaps they can be planted in wide groves. In the selection of trees for farm yards, native species should be the favorites. They may be collected about the farm, will be sure to grow better than most trees that are not indigenous, and may be relied upon to look well. If evergreens are not found in some particular locality, there



are certain varieties which will grow in almost any locality if the conditions are made right for them. Frequently, it is merely a matter of planting only the more hardy evergreen or deciduous species on the sides facing the worst winds. But in any case, horticultural and imported varieties of trees and shrubs should be used sparingly if at all. We do not lack for variety or for beauty in the native vegetation in any section of this country.

In making a selection of shrubs, it is likewise possible to depend largely upon the native vegetation. Farmers usually dislike the native shrubs, as they are accustomed to grub them out of the fields and hedgerows; but a farmer in one section will pay a high price for a single bush which is strange to him, though very likely a common native plant, perhaps even an annoying weed, in another part of the country. Many of the shrubs used in the yards and grown by the nurseries, are merely natives of other parts of this country. There are, however, cultivated varieties of shrubs which, for their flowers or fruit, are quite indispensable about any home. A judicious selection of these horticultural varieties, such as the lilacs, is desirable, but it should be remembered that, for a greater part of the growing season, they will bear nothing but leaves. Therefore, shrubs should be selected which have good foliage,—that is, foliage of no unusual tone of green, of small leaves rather than large, and dense. Trees or shrubs whose leaves fall very early are not desirable. Also plants with strange or peculiar foliage or of unusual habits of growth,—in short, all plant freaks,—should be avoided. In the fall one expects to see foliage in brilliant colors, as this is a season of color; but in spring or summer, green leaves are needed for a background for the flowers or fruit. Even if some of the shrub varieties have no showy flowers, the variation in the green of their foliage will be equally pleasing.

About the house shrubs should be used rather sparingly. Single plants at some of the corners, and occasional groups look best. A house should look well of itself and should not need to be covered up with planting. If it is built too high out of the ground to appear well, filling about it is the only remedy, as the trouble is due to defective grading, not planting. To smother the house in planting, or to make it appear as though supported by bushes, is only to add error to error. The vegetation, therefore, should be confined mostly to the borders, and drawn out into the open lawn only where it is necessary to partially separate one part of the yard from another. All areas should be generally open and unobstructed.

The additional study and development of the yard, in order to afford more than merely a barely passable setting for the house, should not add much to the amount of planting used, nor should it make the yard appear cluttered, nor materially affect the amount of care required. More livable yards result, for the most part, when merely a little more forethought is used in planning them.

If one endeavors to think of places that have impressed him as being attractive, he may find it difficult to recall just how those places were laid out. It is most likely that the impression was one of its entirety rather than of its component parts, such as an elm tree, a few rose bushes, a garden seat, and a bed of petunias. In other words, such a scene was a picture, not merely a collection of objects. For this reason, in planning a yard, everything that is done should give a positive answer to the question: Will this make the home grounds look better as a whole scene? No matter what the individual taste as to the home grounds may be, one should always keep in mind their total effect while planning

their details. It should be remembered, also, that the house is the center of the picture. The lawns serve merely as a carpeted floor, or groundwork, on which the trees and the shrubs are so arranged as to best set off the house. Borders furnish the frame to the picture. They should therefore be simple and dignified, and will look best if composed mostly of green foliage. This proscenium of green, when it opens to a pleasant outlook over the fields, is also the best frame to the distant picture, and may likewise serve as a background to set off the beauty of clumps of flowering shrubs along the edge of the border itself. The outlooks from the house should be so planned as to avoid any confusion of interests; in one direction one should see only unbroken lawn and distant border; in another, some shrubs, showy with flowers or berries; in another, an open view over the meadows; and perhaps, in still another, the suggestion of a garden or, what is fully as beautiful, a vista through the rows of an orchard. By these simple means and these unified effects may the yard about a farmhouse be made more livable, and homelike, and the country of which the yard is a part, may be more enjoyed and appreciated as an ideal setting for a home.



## CHAPTER VII

A keen appreciation of the possibilities of land, irregular either in contour or in outline, will frequently enable one to select and to purchase at low cost lots which may be made into far more interesting homes than can comparatively flat lots which are usually considered more valuable. If one has seen interesting examples of houses and yards, cleverly planned to fit lots of peculiar shapes, or perhaps recalls hillside situations turned to interesting account, he may be more alive to the opportunities afforded by these unusual conditions. As a rule, lots of odd shapes, remnants of land in a block, land below the level of the street, or very high above it, or plots in any other way irregular, are thought thereby to be depreciated in value and difficult or more costly to develop. Consequently they are hard to sell, and therefore are usually less expensive.

Ordinarily the houses and the yards on such sites are cheap and unattractive, or, at best, but awkward adaptations of plans to contour conditions. This may be due to the economy necessary in their construction or to a want of appreciation of the possibilities of artistic development which the land affords. As unattractive rather than clever developments are more common to these irregular lots, the opinion consequently prevails that they are undesirable. Those whose experience has shown them the error of this opinion may be able to take good advantage of their better understanding. In looking about, one may find lots in well-built-up and desirable localities, which have apparently been rejected on account of their irregularity. However, in addition to some understanding of the planning of small homes on flat ground, in more complicated situations one must still be able to adhere to the fundamental principles governing planning. A very close examination of the conditions existing on any lot will be necessary, in order to make certain that it does have some possibilities. A flat lot offers more alternatives for the convenient arrangement of a home. Irregularity in the outline of a lot may appear to afford either too much or too little space in the places where it is most needed. When there is a marked difference of level in a plot, the general allotment of space becomes complicated. Planning for the areas which, by reason of their use, are closely related to the house and desirably of a similar elevation, requires a careful selection of the site for the house, and frequently, also, clever planning of the house itself is necessary in order to adapt it to a perhaps unusual situation. An amateur in landscape architecture, by reason of his interest in, and appreciation of, these picturesque examples of small homes,—most likely the result of broader experience and of keen observation,—may perhaps recognize the possibilities of a lot or of a piece of land, and, further, be correct in his estimate of its value. But it is not likely that he alone will be able to plan it to the best advantage.

To make the best plans for small and irregular lots, considerably more skill and experience is required than to plan larger properties which are uncomplicated by either want of sufficient space or irregular topography. Experience and skill, however, should enable one to use more of the topographical conditions as they exist and to fit a plan to them with less expensive grading and construction; and it should also enable him to turn to good use and to picturesque effect many

conditions which in the beginning were seeming difficulties. However, in selecting a lot one should be careful to distinguish between irregularities which may be turned to good effect, and those which in fact are difficulties. Some conditions will render a good plan more expensive or even impossible.

It is natural for one viewing a piece of land, to think first of the possible site for the house; and this is the logical first thought. More possibilities will suggest themselves to one having some knowledge of house planning, of course, as his conception of house plans will be more flexible. At the same time, it is necessary to observe carefully the lay of the land about any assumed house site, as it is by this means alone that uncorrectable mistakes are avoided, the least expensive plans realized, and the most attractive homes made possible. Irregularity, in outline or in surface, does in fact complicate the problem of planning; and it necessarily follows that careful planning is thereby made still more important. A house is unquestionably the most important single feature; but to look its best and to best serve its purposes, it must be planned as a part of, and in accord with, the land adjoining it. The cost of the entire development, the time required for its completion, the greatest convenience, the best appearances, and, accordingly, the ultimate value of the property, all depend upon comprehensive and skillful planning at the start.

Thus the selection of a site for a new house is an important step, as, whether or not he realizes it, one in effect plans not only the house, but also the whole lot, for better or for worse. By the term house site considerably more than mere structural possibility for building or good outlooks is implied. When houses are located and built with no thought of their relation to the land about them, what are the results? First of all, more grading will usually be necessary to fit the land to the house sufficiently to be even useful, and this means unnecessary expense. Moreover, the opportunity to obtain the most convenient and interesting scheme is lost. What, then, are the requisites of a good site for a house? First, it is generally agreed that the site should be examined from the point of view of the structural aspects of the building,—the possibilities afforded for an attractive interior and for pleasant outlooks. Secondly, the house site selected should be examined in its relation to the land immediately adjoining and to the entire lot, with special consideration of the amount of space to be available on all sides and of the elevations in their possible relation to the floors of the house and to particular rooms.

At any stage in the examination of a lot, one may take note of those parts which, by reason of their conformation, their relative elevation, or their trees or other growth, suggest interesting opportunities for the making of lawns, gardens of any kind, or routes for walks or drives. The position of the house is sometimes determined merely by its relation to exceptional topographic opportunities for those features which must adjoin it. In such cases, the site for the house itself is not at first so evident as are the situations adapted to the various outdoor features; but houses so located are admirably placed to enjoy the grounds about them, and plans thus evolved are likely to be inexpensive and interesting. In the examination of a lot it matters but little what one sees first or last, but sooner or later it is essential that one find the situations possible for a house and for lawns, gardens, roads, and the like; and he must decide on these not as unrelated features, but in relation to his conception of an entire plan. Further,



one must recognize when it is better and less expensive to sacrifice one feature, in order to take advantage of good opportunities for several other or more important features. One is not likely to find lots which are capable of absolutely satisfactory development. To observe irregular land and to visualize possible plans for it which are in the main correct and which are a sufficient basis for a judgment of the land's value, is indeed difficult. Nevertheless, everyone should cultivate a better understanding of planning lots, especially irregular ones, for residences, as the advantages are obvious.

In the study of planning flat lots, one may possibly have formed some opinion concerning the relation of the main indoor and outdoor features and of a reasonable apportionment of the area of the lot. Plans for lots irregular in outline are not likely to require any material change from the diagrammatic scheme for the main features already mentioned, and must not if the plans are to be convenient. The outlines of the several areas may be less regular than those in the average city lot, but the amount of space allotted to each feature is of greater importance than is its outline; and, as was the case in the simple examples, the position of the house is the most important factor in the allotment of space. Lots of irregular outline, or of very irregular topography, may require that the house be turned out of parallel with the street, in order to meet the conditions of the lot. If a building line must also be taken into consideration, the house plan itself may sometimes be slightly altered in order to conform in a measure to the street and to the angles of the outline of the lot. In very rough land, however, building lines are not likely to be closely adhered to, and houses located and planned primarily with respect to conditions on their own lots, look best from the street also.

Then, adhering still to our concept of an arrangement essential for principal features, perhaps it may be further conceded that a more picturesque scheme is both practical and pleasing for irregular ground. A variation in levels, however, involves many practical difficulties, as well as charming possibilities. One must plan for the accessibility of an assumed house site to the public road, by a driveway and walks. The area suitable for service must be accessible in both its position and its elevation. Pleasure grounds, as well as porches and terraces, to be most satisfactory, should be, at least in part, on a level very near to that of the main floor of the house, although by careful attention to drainage, gardens may be both convenient and interesting on levels slightly above, as well as a little below, that of the first floor. In their extensions, however, gardens may occupy a slope rising considerably above the first-floor level. In this relation to the house, the pleasure ground is more plainly in view from the house than if it were a downward slope. Lawns, as well as some parts of the service area, may, if necessary, be less accessible in respect to elevation. While unquestionably a lawn will be more used if the number of steps leading to it is not great, still, if the topography adjoining the house affords an ample area which is comparatively flat, a satisfactory lawn may be made, even at a considerably lower level, and still afford the house a pleasant outlook. The area for a garden is usually much smaller than that required for a lawn, and therefore it is more economical to adapt the plan to an area already suitable for a lawn, even if this requires considerable cutting or filling of the garden. Thus one must know the requirements for each feature in respect to conformation, size, and relative position; and the methods and costs

of necessary improvement operations, and must weigh all these factors before he can form even visionary plans for a lot or can reach an opinion as to its possibilities.

The planning of irregular land may be still further complicated by the trees which may happen to be growing upon it. To design a house cleverly in relation to existing mature trees is to obtain at the start the effect of years. Trees near the site chosen for the house should therefore be taken into consideration by the designer of the house, and should be included with it in the composition of the picture. But as they cannot be greatly changed in form by trimming, and usually cannot be moved, nor have the conditions about their roots materially altered, both patience and skill are necessary to adapt plans to them. If house plans or plans for the grounds are drawn without regard for existing trees, a far greater number than is actually necessary will have to be cut down and lost; and, further, those which remain, having no studied relation to the house, the gardens or the other features, will neither gain from, nor contribute beauty to, the scheme.

Old trees are distinctly an asset, and therefore one usually pays more for a lot on which there are good trees. Not to use them is of course only to waste that for which one has already paid. But to save a sufficient number of them to afford satisfactory shade is really good only if one has so drawn his plans as to achieve the effect of the trees having been planned for just those spots where they are growing; and, only thus can existing tree growth be capitalized to its fullest extent. Of course one kind of a tree is suited for one position and another best fitted for other effects, and also an incidental or picturesque arrangement of trees is frequently better than a stiffly symmetrical arrangement. Therefore considerable artistic ability or appreciation is required to adapt a plan to old trees or to select and to locate young trees in distinctive positions where they will someday grow to produce the desired effects.

Old shrubs, either native or cultivated, can be moved more easily and safely than can trees. Still, a year or more will be necessary for shrubs so moved to regain their original thrifty growth. Shrubs are not so easily injured by cutting about their roots as are trees, but this information should not lead one to treat them carelessly. All existing conditions should be capitalized. In fact, even existing structures may at times be utilized with little repair or addition. The cost nowadays of such accessory structures, as summerhouses, arbors, and the like, is so excessive that their value seldom seems to justify them. Unquestionably, however, they add greatly to the appearance and pleasurable use of the yard. Rocky outcrops may be used very effectively for picturesque effects, and of course lend themselves especially to naturalistic gardening. Occurring near the house, they may likewise be combined very effectively with conventional features. One should make a careful survey of all vegetation, topographic details, old foundations or structures, and the like, with a view to their possible use or adaptation.

In planning for space on uneven ground, one should recognize fully the real usefulness of both level and sloping ground, as well as the appearances resulting from their proper and improper adaptation. Usually, the area assigned to a single purpose looks larger and affords more available space for practical purposes if it is comparatively level. For example, a lawn broken into several levels by ter-



paces, or one made on a steep slope, appears smaller than an area of the same size which is in one level and unbroken sweep; a turncourt on more than a slight grade requires a radius larger than that ordinarily used, to eliminate the danger of cars skidding at these places; and terraced vegetable gardens have only their level areas available for use. Terraces resulting from the leveling required for lawns, turncourts, and the like may support the planting necessary to enclose and separate the various features on the different levels, thus wasting no space. Pleasure gardens do not demand extensive levels, and therefore these may be adapted to almost any form of topography.

A slightly hollowed (concave) grade is the most pleasing one for a lawn; and if the area is large, gradually steepening slopes may, with excellent effect, mount at the borders to marked differences in level. Lawns necessarily made on slopes for a greater part of their area are in effect more pleasing, and appear more nearly level, if the lowest ground is not at their borders. To avoid this condition it is even better to steepen a part of the slope, in order to obtain a little flat ground, and perhaps even a slight rise, before the borders are reached. For very conventional effects, lawns should be quite flat; but if picturesque effects are desired, a varied but generally concave lawn surface is preferable. The outstanding features of a lawn are its extent and the unbroken sweep of its surface. Hence it is plain to be seen that the part of the lot selected for this purpose should have suitable topography.

Gardens also appear larger if all on the same level. But gardens for small homes do not, as a rule, need to appear extensive in order to look well. And however broken the garden surface may be, even if it consists of a series of steep terraces, as long as the dimensions of its details are not unreasonably small, the scale will not be petty and the terraced garden will be pleasing. As a rule, gardens need diversity, both in level and in plan; and distinct differences in levels afford opportunity for such decorative details as steps and walls in addition to the usual garden features, which, in turn, seen from different elevations multiply the pleasing aspects of the garden. Of course, the character of the garden area immediately adjoining the house needs to be more roomlike in order to be a proper adjunct to the living room. Beyond this area immediately adjoining the house, however, the gardens may consist of naturalistic or conventional effects on rising or falling grades, preferably taking advantage of existing conditions; but they must be congruous parts of the whole. On rough and irregular terrain, unavoidable remnants of ground may almost always be adapted to some interesting architectural or gardenlike feature.

One is less apt to realize or to concern himself with the requirements or the opportunities in the more distant parts of the yard than he is with the practical aspects of entrance facilities and with the appearance of his house from the street. Many persons balk at the suggestion of locating a house on a level which is considerably higher or much lower than that of the street. As was stated in chapters II and III, the function of the front yard is that of furnishing an appropriate foreground to the house, together with entrance facilities. Nevertheless, unusual or difficult conditions are not in themselves a sufficient reason for not making practical and interesting entrance drives and arranging for the satisfactory appearance of the house from the street. Similar topographic conditions will usually prevail along a street and even throughout a neighborhood. Occurring thus,

or even on a single lot, such conditions are a visible reason for an unusual plan, and if plans employ clever rather than awkward methods and details, the effects may be indeed pleasing. For this statement there is ample proof in well-done examples. Drives may have to resort to profiles which do not conform to the grades of the lawn; they may have to cross the lawn, or even to receive other treatment than that ordinarily used, and, in fact, quite contrary to the principles previously set forth. But the houses and the drives will both look well and be practical, if the conditions of any particular situation are cleverly met and if the result is apparently intentional rather than haphazard.

The entrance problem is a very important one, and in the examination of a lot, if there are apparent reasons for doubting the possibility of a satisfactory entrance, this question should be decided before any further consideration is given to the lot. A close observation of the conditions may be sufficient, or some information as to the actual elevations may be necessary. At least one should visualize a plan for drives and be reasonably certain of its practicability, before he seriously considers purchasing the property. It is possible to make foot approaches of a satisfactory nature over topographic conditions that will by no means permit a good road, and therefore less thought need be given to this matter. In order to obviate the necessity for a drive, garages may sometimes be recessed in a bank rising steeply from the street, and though opening directly on the sidewalk, may be made not unattractive by means of heavy planting about them. Still, garages so located may as well be on a nearby lot, as far as the convenience to the owner is concerned, since a long, steep foot approach is usually the only connection with the house, and this is both undesirable for a main entrance and expensive for service. Under some conditions, however, it may be possible to locate the house directly on the street line and to make the garage merely a part of its basement. This arrangement would, of course, permit of a stairway connecting the garage directly with the main portion of the house. However it would be an exceptional condition indeed that would justify such a scheme, and other plans are more likely to be preferable.

Drives may be made to enter at one side of a front yard, to turn and climb the slope across the width of the lawn, and to turn again when the other side is reached, thence passing in the usual manner between the house and the side property line to the garage. In such cases, the drive should cross the lawn at a level sufficiently below the house to be practically out of sight therefrom. The steeply sloping ground may be attractively planted, and if desirable the drive may be thus quite hidden from either the house or the street. Heavy planting on the steep grade may in appearance serve to give the house more support; and if much of the front area is covered with suitable varieties of woody plants, the abruptness of the grade may thus be made less evident. Drives may enter lots considerably below the street by a reversal of these devices. When this is done, it is best to have the slope nearest the sidewalk the steepest and to make for all possible width in level directly in front of the house. Sometimes it may seem best to approach a house high above the street by means of a deep cut, the retaining walls or the abrupt slopes on either side serving, with the aid of heavy planting, to render it less noticeable. A main drive of this kind may be made to afford a very private and enclosed entrance, and if used as a service drive, it may be almost completely hidden. Of course, in sections where heavy snows are prevalent, such a drive may not always be



serviceable in winter. It is not possible to describe methods suitable for all situations, however, as the limiting circumstances in each case may necessarily make the exception the rule.

Foot approaches may be adapted to almost any situation, and to be practical, interesting, and even decorative, require only some ingenuity for their design. Steps, walls, and possibly the use of suitable planting, may make these entrance walks more expensive than those for comparatively level front yards, but other economic advantages of the irregular over the level lot may justify this labor and expense. As a rule, walks should preferably follow the line of the drive. If the drive is well-made and smoothly paved, it may serve both as a drive and as a walk. If the front space is clear and open, and if there are no obstructions to any plan for the walks, these are usually best made to start from the street at one or both corners of the lot and to approach the house on a curving line of which the steeper part is near the street, thus permitting a more gradual approach near the house. This suggestion is in accordance with the general principle of having a reasonable amount of comparatively level ground immediately surrounding the house, whatever may be its elevation with respect to the street. There are few situations indeed which will not permit a satisfactory setting for the house far below the public road if the slope does not crowd too closely toward the front of the building, and this, too, quite regardless of the necessity for walls or for steep slopes adjoining the sidewalk.

While it is hardly safe to attempt generalizations for examples of so variable a nature, it is thought that low-lying land is more easily made into interesting yards than is very high ground, providing of course, that good drainage is possible. However, a high situation is usually a commanding one, and may afford more outlook than does the low-lying property. In a city, however, distant outlooks are not always interesting and may even be unsightly. If one's yard is higher than the adjoining lots its enclosure is difficult, as the ground at the borders is likely to be lower than that about the house; and this necessitates the planting of larger trees and shrubs at the start or a long wait for them to grow before they can be very effective. High situations, again, are usually exposed and dry, and therefore difficult ones in which to grow any but the most hardy plants. More enclosure is therefore necessary for success with the average assortment of plants, and also more soil preparation is required. Furthermore, without the appearance of sufficient protection, it is impossible to achieve an attractive and homelike atmosphere of privacy. Still, there are advantages and disadvantages to be considered in all situations, resulting from their relatively high or low elevations, and at the start, when one is choosing a site, is the time to weigh these as well as other possibilities.

Whatever plan may be conceived for an irregular lot, practical convenience must be served; and the essential function of each feature must be borne in mind when it is assigned to any particular topographical conformation. The contour of any part of the land should be suitable for any feature intended for it, and the position of that feature on the lot and in the plan should be determined chiefly by its use. The relative levels of various features should not interfere with their use, but should rather contribute to their attractiveness. Speaking more in detail, trees and minor irregularities of the land should suggest the detailed design for each feature. If a lot consists of several comparatively level areas separated by steeply sloping ground, so far as possible the more important or

larger elements should be placed in these level areas, while the slopes between them are accepted as the natural lines of subdivision within the lot, possibly to be planted. From this it is evident that the straight lines usually demarking the subdivision of areas on flat lots are not always suitable to uneven ground. Straight lines and regularly shaped areas are unquestionably more economical of space. But in so far as the requirements of the several features permit, it is more important to economize in grading, and to so bend one's conception of the essential arrangement for the main elements, that it may fit gracefully with the less conventional conditions.

Principles and conventions are good things when intelligently applied, and flexibility of opinion is apt to be an indication of greater understanding. In order to develop a point of view for the planning of land of marked irregularity, one must start with a clear conception of the fundamental requirements for a residence property, as exemplified in the simplest form on small flat lots of regular outline. The functions of each element, together with its relation to the other elements, must be thoroughly understood. Persistent observation and analysis of examples, wherever they are to be found, will broaden one's conception of these essential features. It is easy to criticize, and criticism not too hasty will sometimes disclose mistakes and perhaps suggest better details. The study of many examples and the gathering of a vocabulary of details may develop one's ability to visualize plans. However, rigidity of opinion in one's own conception of a plan for a home, or a similar tenacity in respect to the plans advocated for flat, rectangular lots in the foregoing chapters, is indicative of little understanding of fundamental principles and of a narrow experience. One must construct a background of understanding before he can trust himself to be flexible in his opinions, and he must have ideas before he can visualize plans.

There are some details concerning the shaping of surfaces and the resulting effects, which apply generally to all conditions, and these will be briefly explained at this time in order that they may perhaps further clarify the foregoing explanations of this chapter. Usually a house is built on an elevation, or with respect to an elevation, called the *ground line*, which is a level slightly above that of the sidewalk in front of the house. This arrangement looks well partly because it is customary and partly because it is practical for drainage and affords the house a good setting from the point of view of the street. Hence this customary relation of the front with respect to other elevations must be the starting point for any proposed exceptions.

When houses stand slightly higher or lower than is desirable, suitable compensation may be made by skillful grading of the front area. This area may be excavated to make for a slight degree of concavity whose lowest part will be from two-thirds to three-quarters of the distance from the sidewalk to the house, thus resulting in a decidedly steeper slope immediately approaching the house than near the street. By this device the house can be made to appear, from the street, about as high above it as it is above the low part of the lawn. Hence it may be assumed that if, in the profile between a point of view and a terminal, the gradient breaks at a point nearer the terminal and from thence rises at a steeper gradient, the resulting effect will be that the terminal appears higher than it actually is. The longer segment may slope downward, may be level, or may slope upward, but as long as the shorter segment is noticeably steeper, the effect



remains the same, differing only in degree according to the circumstances. If this scheme of concave grading is applied to a front lawn, the lawn should conform to the same profile for a width greater than that of the house, if not of the entire lawn; but as the borders are reached, the grades may be gradually merged into the conditions on adjoining lots. Perhaps it is safe to say, by way of a specific example, that a house standing forty feet distant from a street and on a level with the sidewalk, may be made to appear somewhat above the sidewalk level if, for a distance of twenty-five feet, the grade slopes downward not more than six to eight inches, is comparatively flat for about five feet, and then rises evenly to the original level of the house front. With a greater distance, of course, these proportions may be exaggerated to produce the same effect. The slope downward cannot be noticeable, however, without disclosing the deception, at least to a degree.

When the house stands considerably below the level of the street, a concave profile is usually desirable. This conformation makes for more spaciousness in front of the building, and also affords it good drainage, as well as a slightly elevated platform on which to stand. Under these circumstances the house is sure to appear at a higher elevation than it actually is. Further, if the situation calls for conventionality, this effect may be increased by the construction of a formal terrace at the low point, thus making a still steeper slope to contrast with that of the gradual segment. By this scheme, the ground between the top of the terrace and the face of the house can be apparently level. In all cases the ground should slope away from the house sufficiently to insure satisfactory drainage. Walls and steps substituted for formal terraces about houses produce similar effects with respect to elevations. Furthermore, it should be pointed out that the terminals of a concave profile are not only in effect raised, but also appear to recede. Thus a house with its front lawn graded in this particular form of concavity will appear not only higher than it is, but also farther back from the street. Looking from the house toward the street, if the concavity is but slight, there will be no noticeable difference; but in case of marked differences in level, there will be some foreshortening.

While a concave lawn is pleasing in itself, quite irrespective of the effects it produces, for a house already sufficiently high above the street an even slope from the sidewalk to the house, becoming slightly more level as it approaches thereto, should be adopted. The slope from the sidewalk to the house should, in most cases, be from  $2\frac{1}{2}$  to 3 per cent, and in the case of slopes which are one or two feet in excess of this, a filling of the lawn to produce a convex profile with the major part of its slope at the front line will restore the normal appearance. A convex profile generally tends to lower the terminal, and the greater part of the steepness resulting must usually be nearest the point of view, thus in some cases requiring steps. This modeling is not a very pleasing one, however, although very common. Further, it tends to foreshorten in a reverse direction from that of concave profiles. Houses standing at an elevation very high above the street, however, have no alternative but to adopt this form of grading. Excessively steep embankments may sometimes be planted in a manner to soften the effect and even to make the abruptness less noticeable. Usually medium and low-growing shrubs are combined with species of vines, which all grow together and form an unbroken

and undulating contour. For special effects, of course, other combinations are necessary.

Lawns to the rear or at the side of a house usually look best in a modeling which is generally concave. This contour, in contrast to convex modeling, tends to increase the apparent size of these areas. The motif of a lawn is an open center with solid boundaries, and its spaciousness may be accentuated by means of a concave modeling. Applying the principles of concave modeling just explained, if the low part of a lawn is made nearer to the far boundaries than to the house, the effect of apparently greater depth is produced. The rear lawns adjoining small city or suburban houses may be given a slight degree of concavity by little or no actual hollowing of the grades, but rather by filling to raise the borders about a foot or perhaps slightly less. Even this slight degree of concavity is effective and pleasing.

There are other details pertaining to grading which contribute greatly toward practical construction and toward finished appearances. Grass slopes or terraces, if not conventional, should, in most cases, have what is called an "O G profile,"—that is, a reverse curve; and the radius of curvature at the top should be less, while that at the base of the slope should be greater. This curvature affords stability and is by far the best detail for what is commonly known as an "informal slope." The per cent of slope should preferably not average more than one foot of rise to two feet of width. When steps are built into a terrace, the slanting surface of the terrace should conform to the ratio of the steps. Steeper embankments are of course necessary at times, and usually these are densely planted with vegetation that will prevent washing. Formal terraces should comply with the suggestions just mentioned as appropriate to the percentage of slope. Grass ramps used in place of steps to connect different levels are usually made as a formal terrace, but in a ratio of one foot of rise to eight feet of width. This feature serves to draw more closely together the levels so connected, and possesses the advantage of greater simplicity. Ramps may be either conventionalized or treated in an informal way.

Walls can be used between different levels, and while the expense of constructing them is greater than for terracing, they occupy less space. In many instances "dry masonry" may be employed in the walls. This is less expensive than solid masonry laid in cement, and requires less foundationing. Dry walls, to be stable, must usually be laid to considerable "batter," and cannot be as narrow as are walls of cemented masonry. The character of each type of wall is quite different, and one should not determine on one or another from a consideration of cost alone. If walls are employed, very likely steps will also be needed, and this question should be studied carefully. In the first place, one should realize that the ratios satisfactory for indoor stairs will not prove equally good about the garden, in the entrance walk, or even at the porches and the doorways. The conditions affecting steps out-of-doors are entirely different from those inside the house. Most out-of-doors steps have a decorative value as well as a practical one; they usually occur in short rather than long flights, and they are wider, and rarely is there a ramp or a hand rail within reach for support. As a rule a good ratio for out-of-door steps is six inches rise to fourteen inches tread, with perhaps a quarter of an inch "wash" allowed on each tread. If one wishes to express a very close relation between two levels in a garden or between terraces and gardens, the same rise may be used



with a tread an inch or two wider, but if the rise is made an inch less, then three or four inches should be added to the tread. Very easy ratios are best adapted to short flights of perhaps only three steps. Of course if longer flights are necessary, these may be effectively interrupted by landings, thus permitting the use of the easy ratios with the assurance of satisfactory results. In addition to practical considerations, both steps and walls should receive some thought concerning their decorative aspect. Little or no additional cost will be necessary in order to make these details somewhat decorative and suitable for homes not of an unduly expensive or elaborate nature, and the necessity of this decorative requirement is most plainly realized when it is wanting. It should be noted that walls and steps mark differences in level more noticeably than do turf slopes, and these details should be chosen according to the effect desired. The designing of suitable architectural details requires experience and taste, together with a realization of their importance.

The drainage problems incidental to irregular lots are very important, although usually they may be satisfactorily handled in a simple way and by means which are both inexpensive and self-maintaining. As the grades are determined in the vicinity of the house, the surfaces should be so moulded as to carry rain water away from the base of a building, and if natural drainage does not produce this result, catchbasins or other artificial means will be necessary. Usually, by the introduction of imperceptible slopes in conventional features, and by slight depressions along the edges of lawns and outlying areas, the water may be led away into the plantations or into depressions where it will gradually seep out of sight and follow the underground course of what was originally its natural drainage. If the surface of each area can be drained separately, no great volume of water will collect at any one point, and thus there will be no resultant erosion nor any need of catchbasins and drains. Low-lying areas that are likely to receive the surface flow from adjoining properties should be carefully examined to ascertain whether there will be any danger at flood times, and also whether there is ample drainage by some means of which the rights are protected. A lot with very porous subsoil can have dry wells located at several low points, and thus providing a good drain which requires no future attention and is very inexpensive to construct. In soils which incline to imperviousness, these wells should either be made very large, or else not used at all. If the drainage question cannot be easily solved, one should realize that his best economy is the purchase of some expert advice.

The reader may not find this discussion of details especially interesting, since it is more than possible that he has not observed these things with an eye sufficiently professional to appreciate their purpose. Discussions of this nature are little more than meaningless if they do not recall actual examples, and for a certainty they are abstract without illustration. The purpose of this chapter is not to teach the reader how to design and to carry out plans for irregular lots, but is rather intended to convince him of their possibilities for development and to stimulate his interest and his observation. Ordinarily all these questions are left to the builder, whose point of view is usually that the best site for a house is that which it is easiest and cheapest to build,—necessitating the least excavation for the cellar and the least trouble in making foundations. He gives no thought to questions of appearances beyond the walls of the building. When he has finished, however, the owner alone is left to face the problems, and also the bills, for his mistakes.

This is but a "penny wise and pound foolish policy." The wisdom of engaging the advice of a professional man, when an investment is contemplated that involves from ten to twenty thousand dollars—which most new homes now cost—might seem evident. But it will be many years before this will become the custom. Therefore, if new homes are to be an improvement on old ones, the point of view of the public must become more intelligent with respect to landscape planning. It is said that "a little knowledge is a dangerous thing." But however that statement may apply, all will agree that the public might well know a little more about landscape planning than is commonly the case today, in order that advantage might accrue both to the people themselves and to the appearance of the suburbs.



Chap VII

LANDSCAPE PLANNING  
FOR SMALL HOMES

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E. GORTON DAVIS  
DEPARTMENT OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE  
COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE, CORNELL UNIVERSITY  
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## PART II

### CHAPTER VII

#### CLASSIFICATION OF PLANTS

The woody plants (the trees, the shrubs, and the vines), the herbaceous flowering plants and ground covers, and even the grass are all essential elements in the structure and the scenery of the yard. However, a discriminating selection and an intelligent arrangement of plant material is necessary in order to produce the essential structure and the fitting scenery. In building a house, one buys the assortment of material required for a given plan; and in order to produce the house it is necessary, first, to have a plan, next, to know the kinds and quantities of material needed, and, lastly, to know how to assemble them. Most of the material loses its identity in the assemblage, but this result is intentional and requisite for any degree of success in the making of a house. In the yard the situation is precisely the same, and in order to make useful and attractive yards it is equally necessary to plan first, then to determine what is required for the plan, and, finally, to assemble the material properly.

Many persons start wrong by first making a selection of their favorite plants. Then they may endeavor to arrange and to so combine these as to make an attractive and useful yard; but they encounter many misfits, and their success is limited. In most instances, these favorite plants are merely scattered about, with thought only for their thrifty growth and for the enjoyment of them as individuals. Nevertheless, one's interest in either plants or buildings does not justify the sacrifice of other essential features. Neither houses, nor gardens, nor architectural details, nor plants, nor, in fact, any part of a residence property is more important than the plan for the whole. The *raison d'être* of every element and feature lies only in its contribution to the effect of the entire plan. However, careful planning at the start does not necessarily mean the sacrifice of one's special interests; rather, it affords an opportunity for the best development of each of the elements. Further, the beauty of the whole is then the sum of the beauty of all the parts. Decorative plants, as well as decoration within the house, to appear at their best, must be coordinated with their environment.

In the foregoing chapters much has been said about planning, but now this question arises: when and how does the planning for plants come in? In the very beginning, emphasis was placed upon comprehensive planning as the only means whereby a judicious allotment of space and a reasonable arrangement are possible. The plan formulated at this stage, however, can be merely a generalization. The approximate position for the house, and perhaps its outline, are therein determined; but further study suggests changes, and only after consideration can the exact dimensions of the house be finally decided. A like study of the yard and of its several parts suggests slight changes, perhaps also including some slight alteration in the position of the house or even of details of its plan or of its elevations. Thus, through processes of planning that become more and more detailed, it is ultimately possible to develop an exact plan for the entire lot. When this much has been accomplished, the house may be planned in detail, and even built; and detailed plans for the yard may likewise be made, of which planting plans are a part.

In building a house, one would not think of buying a heterogeneous lot of building material just because he liked it; rather would he carefully buy the material called for in some predetermined plan. Furthermore, by far the greatest part of such material must go into the walls, the floors, and the body of the structure. The decorative features of the house are in a very small proportion to the rest of the house, and are determined as to their position and character in the course of the general planning. Therefore they are essentially a part of the prearranged plan. But it is ridiculous to attempt to plan the decorative details before the structure to which they must be related is designed, as they are the last part of the house to be planned in detail and built. The application of this principle to the yard is quite as necessary as is its application to the house. The border plantations, the hedges or the plantations between the several areas, the trees or the shrubs which frame the house front, and the turf which carpets most of the ground, collectively, make up the structure of the yard. While the plan for the yard is being formulated, gateways, arbors, pools, fountains, seats, and even picturesque groups or special color effects of plants, may suggest themselves or appear necessary in one place or another. In fact, their effectiveness or usefulness in particular positions may even suggest their exact details; but these constitute so small a proportion of the material or of the area of the yard, that they should be the last steps in the planning or the making of the yard. The structure of the yard must first exist before it can possibly be decorated, and general plans must first be formulated before one can have the point of view essential for the consideration of details or of decoration. Thus, planting plans must primarily concern the enclosing plantations, the hedges, the mass planting, and even the arrangement of the lawn area. The importance of the structural planting lies not only in its conversion of a portion of unlimited area into the limited area of a yard and its specific areas, providing privacy and protection, but also in its effective massing of the vegetation, which is essential to the beauty of the yard and as an effective background for the house, the decorative structures, and even the decorative plants.

The open lawn is the foreground of the house front; the flanking trees or shrubs grouped about it furnish its frame; and the plants at the door accentuate its entrance without attracting attention to themselves. If the green of the trees is of a tone that harmonizes with the green of the grass and of the shrubbery, then the planting in the front yard, collectively, serves as a frame and a foreground to the house front, the plants at the door perhaps being slightly more noticeable. Essential as all this planting is, however, it is unquestionably subservient to the house. In comparatively small yards, large shade trees make for a better appearance if they are of a common species, such as elm, maple, the spreading type of oak or the like, because they are unobtrusive. Trim hedges of uniform density and perfection of surface set off most effectively the beautiful form or color of the flowers or fruits of nearby decorative plants. A perfect lawn is likewise essential to the display of an occasional fine specimen tree or shrub that, while not planted in the center of the lawn, may still be somewhat detached from the boundary plantations. The use of the grass of the lawns, yards, and gardens corresponds closely to that of the plain floor coverings inside the house; and the less patchy and the more evenly fine its texture, the more satisfactory the background it furnishes for those things disposed upon it.



Border plantations need not be entirely composed of non-flowering plants in order to serve as backgrounds, but flowering plants selected for this function should qualify as to suitable foliage when there are no flowers. And while it is natural for one to see first the beauty in the flower color, he should endeavor to turn his attention to the question of the beauty of the greens of the foliage. If one cannot easily divorce himself from his all-absorbing interest in flower color, he should realize that, except for a short time in early summer, there are practically no flowers. If the flowers were with us all year round, we might not be so interested in them. The spring is a season of flower, the summer, a time of greens, while in the fall, color is presented to us in still a different aspect; and therefore it is surely expedient, if nothing more, to make the most of each season. But while we enjoy the evergreens when winter takes all other color from us, we should prize them more than we do, considering their all-year-round value, and their usefulness as backgrounds for color, and their intrinsic beauty.

If one wishes to know how to assemble plants to produce effects in accordance with a prearranged plan, he must observe *all* their important characteristics and become well-informed respecting them. For example, there are many kinds of trees, and in height alone they will vary from twenty or twenty-five to fifty feet or more. Some trees, under all ordinary conditions, assume their characteristic form, rounded or pointed; and according to the density and compactness of their manner of growth, this characteristic form or outline will be more or less sharply defined. Other trees will vary markedly under conditions of soil, moisture, and crowded or exposed environment. The same may also be said of shrubs. Evergreen trees and shrubs are more conspicuous than deciduous forms if the latter predominate in a scene or a landscape. Unusual characteristics make all plant forms conspicuous, and they are even more so if in contrast with nearby plants. Size, habit, color value, texture, and like characteristics are the factors which should determine the choice of plants which are intended to produce the effects embodied in a general plan.

To be suitable, the general appearance of the several areas of the yard should be different, and to a considerable degree this must be effected by the selection and arrangement of the vegetation. Even within the lawn itself it is desirable to avoid a monotonous border. Focalization of interest by means of architectural features or suitable plants is desirable at certain points in the border, usually those farthest from the house but plainly in view. Focalization of interest by the use of plants whose characteristics give them individuality also requires the use of other plants about them to constitute a suitable background. These background plants should not stand out as individuals, by reason of interesting, curious, or even unpleasant characteristics; rather, they should lose their identity in order to produce a mass effect of unobtrusive but pleasing foliage. Thus it should be evident that a planting plan for a yard requires both plants that are individually prominent and plants that are suitable for collective or mass effects.

Some analysis of the plant element of the yard and an arbitrary classification of plants producing different effects will perhaps clarify this matter and simplify the process of selection. Let us therefore group all the vegetation to be used into two classes, one including plants which are primarily useful for background effects,—which, growing together, tend to merge into a mass and produce an effect of green foliage varied only slightly in form, tone, and skyline, or silhouette,

—and the other including plants which are distinctive as individuals and perhaps are decorative or showy. In short, the first class may be called plants of *indefinite* form and habit, or plants for background purposes; and the second, plants of *definite* form and habit, or plants for accent or focalization purposes.

What is meant by plants of "indefinite form or habit"? As one walks through a woodland or thicket, his impression is not that of walking between maple or oak or hemlock trees and viburnum, witch hazel, or other bushes and other specific kinds of plants, but just that of woods or coppice. Whatever the particular type of woodland, the impression is a general one; and individual plants composing the woodland are either not noticed at all, or, at most, are not sufficiently prominent to create more than a general, or collective, impression. Even a student of natural science, who is acquainted with most of the plants, has a conception of the plants collectively rather than individually. In most situations where the vegetation is native and spontaneous, one's impression of it is apt to be that of scenery of one kind or another where few if any plants are prominent to any great degree. Where woods or thickets verge upon a clearing or a field, the foliage becomes more dense, but the several kinds of trees or shrubs cannot be differentiated except by close examination, and from a distance their collective effect is merely that of woodland border.

The greater part of our native vegetation is of this indefinite character, the separate plants merging into those about them and displaying no sharp lines nor conspicuous variety. In the spring there is more color, but all the color is harmonious, and produces collective effects similar to those characteristic of the summer. In the fall, likewise, although there may be brilliant color in spots, all the color is brilliant and the greater contrasts are common. At all seasons there is usually a predominance of the more sombre colors, and the occasional brilliant color of flowers, or berries, or even of whole trees in autumnal red, is thus furnished with an ample and a harmonious background.

It is not alone some definite object of interest which makes most views attractive, but it is the setting afforded this object,—the boundless tracts of woods, the fields, and the mass effect of the infinite number of insignificant plants. Without these insignificant plants we could not have our fine scenery. There is variety in our scenery, but it is a subtle variety. It is this contrast with an infinitely greater proportion of indefinite foliage that makes possible our enjoyment of the exception,—the individually interesting or beautiful plants.

What are the characteristics of the individual tree or shrub which, in the mass, make for indefiniteness? When one enters a partial clearing in the woods, where the few remaining trees stand like tall spectres, with few and scattered branches and no regularity of growth, or at least of insufficient density to give the appearance of regularity, he may see good examples of woodland trees. The branches have had to reach for light, and the trees have become irregular in habit, even if of species which, in the open field, would normally tend to develop into symmetrical trees. In the woods the branches interlace, and from a distance, at least, the green of their leaves being similar, there appear no hard and fast lines of foliage demarkation. Some trees, whether in the thicket or in the open, persist in very irregular habits and assume no general symmetry or form. Instead, they spread loosely, seemingly with but one determination,—that of becoming angular and irregular. Many other trees that, from necessity and crowding grow irregularly



in the woods, assume in the open a decidedly dense habit of growth and considerable symmetry of form. However, loosely spreading branches tend to distribute the foliage unevenly, creating masses in one place and leaving voids in another; and this manner of branching results in foliage of varying density, and makes for high lights where light is reflected and for variable shadows where there are recesses. Further, the generally rounded outlines characteristic of many native plants, and which are in themselves less noticeable than pointed outlines, become less evident if the habit of the plant is spreading and free rather than dense and compact.

The leaves of most native plants do not differ greatly in size or in tone of green, and for this reason, in a mixture of them, the individuals are not clearly discernible. The spreading habits of the plants also cause their branches to interweave, and this results in further blending. However, the slight variation in texture and in tone makes for a play of light and shade, thereby preventing monotony and contributing to the indefinite character of the mass. Thus, vagueness of outline, generally rounded but interrupted, and surfaces of similar texture and tone but inconspicuously varied,—in other words, surfaces which are receptive and indefinite rather than hard and repellant, are the characteristics and the effects of vegetation of this class. We greatly admire and prize these plants in our country scenery, and their importance generally, as well as their usefulness for the scenery of our yards, should be evident.

In yards, the planting should unquestionably be more horticultural and artificial than in country scenery; and yet the beauty and the appeal of any scene which consists entirely of very subtle variety rather than of strong contrasts should teach us a lesson in principle which is applicable to small or large yards, to parks, and, in fact, to all plant design. The individual trees, outstanding from the woodland edges and assuming fine proportions, are of the same species that make up the mass of their background; but in their more perfect development lies the secret of the contrast between the individuals and their background. Most persons would do well to cultivate an appreciation of this subtle beauty contrast. Contrast and variety of characteristics in plants are useful, but these principles must be so ordered as to produce the desired scenes. In brief, the plant which lends itself readily to combination is essential, while the showy plant is good if well used but is not absolutely necessary.

What, then, are the characteristics in plants which make for contrary effects, such as definition, accent, or contrast, and therefore render them suitable for purposes of focalization? To begin with, if one can closely observe conditions about him, or even sketches of scenery, he will realize that the lines prevailing in country scenery, and also in cities, are horizontal lines. Most trees and shrubs grow into forms of which the tops are broadly rounded, and masses of this vegetation produce the effect of an undulating, but generally horizontal, line. If to this the similar lines of the topography itself are added, the prevalence of horizontal lines becomes very evident. In very hilly or even mountainous sections, the effects are similar if seen from a distance. In built-up sections of cities, the horizontal lines of streets, fences, and ground lines, are longer than are the vertical lines of buildings. With this predominance of horizontality, any expression of verticalness becomes very evident by reason of the contrast.

Plant forms which express vertical lines tend to produce the strongest accent, though the exact degree of accent depends upon other characteristics which render more or less definite the vertical lines of the plant. For example, the well-known Lombardy poplar expresses vertical lines in its general outline, and also, as every twig and branch of the tree conforms to the same lines, the total effect of the tree is markedly vertical. The foliage of the poplar, however, is somewhat coarse and not very dense, and therefore the mass of the tree is not as effective as it would be if its foliage were very fine and dense as well as very dark green, similar to some of the evergreen trees. While the Italian cypress is not sufficiently hardy to grow in the north of this country, it is an interesting example of a tree expressing, perhaps, the strongest accent. This cypress is very narrow in proportion to its height, is very dense, and is very sharply pointed at the top; and its fine texture, density, and dark green foliage, all taken together, give it a very definite outline. In short, its every detail or characteristic unites to produce a strong accent and a sharp contrast with other vegetation. The well-known red cedar is perhaps more like the Italian cypress than any other tree native to this country, but the habit of the cedar is variable, and its foliage is less dense, although equally dark in value of green. Also, the red cedar is a smaller tree than either the cypress or the Lombardy poplar. A very slender cedar would probably make a stronger accent than a Lombardy poplar of the same size, because of the mass effect of the cedar and because of its relatively darker value; but at maturity, the considerably greater size of the poplar would unquestionably give it the greater prominence. Vertical lines in the foliage for a certainty make for a very strong accent; but size, mass effect, and value of green, are all important contributing factors.

Vertical lines are more unusual both in plant habits and in scenery, but distinctly horizontal branching is likewise uncommon and also creates a sharp contrast with the variable branching habit common to most plants. This horizontal branching, characteristic of some field thornes, pines, and a few other trees and shrubs, is not so apt to occur when the plant is young and is making rapid upward growth, as when it is older. If the growth habit of a plant is open like that of an old white pine, so that the branches and the lines thereby expressed are evident, the accent produced is very distinct. Also, a similar degree of horizontality is expressed if the growth habit of a plant is dense and if the resulting effect is primarily that of a flatly rounded outline. Under these circumstances, as well as in some others, evergreen foliage, fine texture, and dark foliage value contribute to the degree of accent. An interesting example of this is another Italian tree, the stone pine. As a young tree it is much like other pines, but when its rapid growth is accomplished, a flatly rounded and dense head of dark green foliage is formed, and, to make the tree still more striking in appearance, the lower branches fall, leaving this top raised high upon a tall, straight trunk.

Contrasts resulting from colors other than green, due to flowers, fruit, or unusual foliage, are dependent partly upon the color itself and partly upon the colors or values of color of the foliage immediately adjacent. It is generally inadvisable to resort to the use of much strong color, for reasons already mentioned. Strong contrasts are not necessary for pleasing effects, and to manipulate these contrasts successfully requires skill and experience. Dominant colors, such as all shades of red, and yellows except in the light shades, result in foreshortening.



Of course, the brilliant color of fruit scattered through foliage does not have the same intensity of effect as does an entire tree or shrub of red, purple, or yellow foliage, or even as does a profusion of flowers of similar colors. Generally speaking, slight contrasts make for broader effects, and thus tend to enlarge the apparent size of an area, but strong color in any considerable quantity is apt to produce the contrary effect. Light colors,—the delicate shades of pink, yellow, and, of course white, and light or dark blue, —all these may safely be used in gardens or borders, if in keeping with a well-conceived general plan. A plentiful proportion of dark green foliage about colors will always improve the quality of the latter, and also will accentuate the effect of it. However, these remarks in regard to the use of color are intended merely to suggest a guarded use of it.

Extreme contrasts, and the plant characteristics responsible for them, are no doubt evident to interested persons; but degrees of prominence in plants, due to their form, habit, texture, or value of green, in various combinations, and also the contrast of these characteristics with adjacent foliage,—all this close observation and comparative study,—is unusual but nevertheless necessary. If the habit of a tree or a shrub is such as to make for regularity of form and for a sharp, distinct outline, then the form itself will largely determine the degree of prominence. Both ends of the scale, in respect to form, have already been mentioned. The most vertical produces, unquestionably, the strongest degree of accent. Conical forms, and tall, narrow trees whose sides are somewhat rounded, may be considered first in degree of prominence. Columnar, elliptical, round, flatly round, and similar forms follow in their order of degree of accent; and unless these forms are sharply defined, their degree of accent will be largely due to their isolation and to their resulting individuality, rather than to their individual prominence of form. Doubtless, a plant displaying a very perfect spherical form, due either to natural habit or artificial trimming, has a considerable focalizing value. And also, if the form is such as to strongly express horizontality, it is thought that its degree of accent is greater than those of the intermediate forms.

Other characteristics, however, play an important rôle in the determination of degrees of accent. An evenly fine texture or density of foliage materially aids in the expression of form, not only because these characteristics make for mass effect, but also because they are likely to result in a clean-cut outline. Of course, this may sometimes be accomplished artificially by means of shearing. Also, if the branching of a plant or its detailed habit, either in branching or in leafing, expresses lines parallel to the general lines of the plant, then the habit of the plant accentuates its form. If the outline of a plant is one of densely vertical lines, while the branching is evidently variable in direction or even contrary to these lines, then some confusion of expression results, and the degree of accent is thereby lessened. Color, or the value of unusual color in foliage, results in contrast. But while there are exceptions to all rules, let it be accepted without further explanation that, at least in small yards, these contrasts should be restricted to the use of darker and richer qualities of green foliage. Furthermore, coarse-leaved plants and most "weeping" forms are unsuitable for purposes of accentuation or for general massing.

As already suggested, the degree of accent which may be derived from any plant depends not only upon the characteristics of the plant itself, but also upon its contrast with the adjoining plants. For example, if one is using only form and

green foliage to create contrasts, or, in brief, only those effects which are sustained throughout the year, the most striking contrast is produced by the juxtaposition of the most vertical and the most horizontal forms of evergreens. These extremely picturesque contrasts are very effective if very cleverly used, but if they are employed in situations evidently not requiring them, the work appears amateurish and crude. Picturesque contrasts in artificial scenery are very quaint and pleasing in many instances, but this type of scenery, suitable in small yards, is usually the result of combinations of plants and architectural features rather than of combinations of plants alone. That quality in the scenery of yards which makes for breadth and beauty is most satisfying. A keen evaluation of the degrees of accent obtainable from plants enables one to differentiate between plants and their effects, to control focalization, and thus to procure the effect desired, within a small scale or range of contrast. In this careful manner should the element of contrast be used, if the most beautiful entire yard effects are to be produced. Unskillful use of plants is always evident in the misuse of contrasts.



## CHAPTER VIII

### SELECTION AND COMBINATION OF PLANTS

Plants used as individuals, such as shade trees about the house and decorative "specimens," outstanding from the borders or flanking the steps at the entrance or otherwise isolated from any groups or plantations, attract attention to themselves by reason of their isolation, and therefore become comparatively conspicuous, regardless of the appearance of the plants themselves. As plants so used have a degree of prominence to begin with, one should be especially careful not to choose as specimens trees or shrubs which will become too conspicuous. Of course, the common errors in planting a yard are the use of too showy plants, and the promiscuous, unmotivated use of too many of them. As has already been said, a mere collection of plants in a yard is quite distinct from a yard judiciously planted in accordance with a good design. In small yards, one cannot break up the areas with many individual plants without producing both inconvenience and ill effects.

If individual plants can have a useful function to perform in addition to the display of their beauty, they will become a more fitting decoration to the unassuming and simple character suitable for small yards. For example, shade trees have an apparent use, aside from their decorative value; but too many flowering shrubs or fancy trees scattered about have evidently nothing but their own attractiveness to contribute to the yard. Even the suggestion of over-decoration in a small yard is unfortunate, whether by plants or by architectural details. A careful selection of plants and a guarded and skilful use of a few specimens will accomplish greater effectiveness than will an indiscriminating lavishness of decoration.

Individual trees in small yards are very prominent. There is not room for many of them, and the trees seem larger by contrast with the smallness of the yard. It is wise, therefore, to plan for all the individual trees at one time, and with a view to their combined effect. If but a single tree is used in the front yard, it should be very carefully placed with respect to the balance of the whole picture as seen from the street. If the house is not situated midway across the width of the lot, one way to restore the appearance of balance on either side of the entrance walk and the door is to place a tree somewhere on the narrower side. Of course, skill is necessary in the selection of a tree of just the right size and appearance to restore the balance. This tree should not be so obvious as to compete for the interest which should center in the house front and the main entrance. Neither should it cover up too much of the house, nor be too bulky, or even unfortunately small, in comparison with the street trees. Of course, the nearer it is to the front door, the less it will count as a balance; and on the other hand, the farther it is to the side of the lot, the more important the same tree will appear. If, on the opposite, and the larger, side of the front yard another tree seems desirable, then the tree for the narrower side may be still larger, and a comparatively small tree or even a large shrub will suffice to counterbalance it, as the latter will most likely be at a much greater distance from the front door. It must be remembered that the front door should be the center of in-

terest, and therefore conspicuous individual plants on either side of it must be so selected and so placed as to correct or preserve this balance.

If a house stands in the center of its lot, and especially if its facade is a symmetrical one, then any large or conspicuous plants in the front yard should be symmetrically placed and should also be of the same kind, or at least not noticeably different. From the discussions in the foregoing chapters, it should be evident that no front yard foliage should be unduly conspicuous. Massive and round-headed trees and shrubs, for example, are usually more suitable than sharply pointed forms. Moreover, this principle applies also to the plants occasionally used on either side of the front door. When related particularly to some details of the house design, plants should, of course, be considerably smaller than the trees on the lawn, which on the contrary relate principally to the entire house front. However, plants immediately adjoining the doorway may be even more conspicuous than the lawn trees; in fact, they may properly be the most prominent plants in the entire front yard. Frequently fine evergreens or dense, low-growing shrubs that are showy with berries in winter when the leaves have fallen, are most suitable. At times, it is a good plan to shear such deciduous shrubs in order to give them a more distinct and regular form. Unless the house and the door are very elaborate, rounded forms are best. The whole front should be thus carefully studied as a picture, and the individual plants proposed for the area should be subordinated to the *tout ensemble*.

Trees standing on either side of the house, or even behind it, when seen from the street become a part of this aspect, and must be taken into account. Very high boundary planting intended to enclose a garden effectively, may become so prominent in the front-yard scene as to require the use of a stronger accent on the narrow side of the front lawn, such as a massive tree or a tall-boled tree with a spreading top, in order to preserve the balance in the front. It is usually best, however, to plant about the house those large trees which have an indefinite form and growth habit, as, in the last analysis, these are but accessory to the house and therefore should not be conspicuous in themselves. Trees rising above the house and in its rear, frequently add greatly to the appearance of the building and to the homelike atmosphere of the entire property. But such trees should likewise have broadly spreading tops. The most important rear view of a house is that from the lawn behind it, and this is of necessity limited. A shade tree, tall and somewhat spreading in habit, is frequently well placed near the porches or terraces overlooking the rear lawns, for there it provides useful shade as well as making the views from the house out over the lawn more pleasing and interesting.

On a small rear lawn there is rarely space for more than one large tree in addition to those required for the border planting. In fact, unless this lawn is unusually large, medium-sized trees are probably better than large ones. For example, a large tree such as the elm or the red or white oak will, at maturity, have a spread of branches amounting to about sixty feet in diameter. Other trees which will grow equally tall without spreading so widely, and therefore will neither occupy so much space nor cast too much shade, may be selected. As another alternative, one may select trees of a form and habit similar to that of well-known larger trees but smaller in every way. If high-headed trees, such as the elm, are desired, unless one can plant fairly large trees at the start, it will



be necessary, to wait until they have grown before all their lower branches can be cut off. Of course, if one can afford it, large trees should be purchased at the start for the distinctive positions about the house. Under these circumstances, both the desired species and a habit particularly suitable may be simultaneously obtained. However, whether one or two specimen trees are to be used in the rear, and whether they are to be near the house, or distant from it, or both, the spaciousness of the lawn should by no means be obstructed, nor the good quality of the turf broken by too much shade. Generally speaking, all such trees should be either grouped about the house in order to appear related primarily to it, or sufficiently near the boundaries to somewhat demark the extremities of the lot. It is thought that a judicious use of large trees, for the most part of the indefinite class, does not clutter up a small property, affords shade where it is needed, and thus may contribute materially to the effect of enclosure and of a pleasant, home-like atmosphere.

In the case of an enclosed lawn which is very deep and ample, a recess in the borders and views terminating therein may be accentuated in depth by means of two or more massive trees disposed on either side of the recess, thus narrowing it. Of course, this use of individual trees requires foliage not of itself very noticeable, as the plants of showy nature must be located in the depth of the recess in order to accentuate the length of the view. Large shrubs may be used where the space is more limited with similar but with not as marked results. Specimen shrubs and trees located at the far sides of lawns and serving primarily as termini for long views from the house may be of a somewhat conspicuous nature. However, unless the lawns are quite ample, plants intended to sharply terminate the longest view lines, thus giving prominence to the lawn's greatest dimensions, had best be incorporated in the borders.

In addition to these possibilities for the use of individual plants there are, of course, many which pertain more particularly to specific conditions in various yards, and these are none the less important. Among these particular opportunities are situations at the angles of houses, in which a single, fine, large plant looks far better than a lot of little plants, or even than a number of larger plants. Also the use of evergreen, or even deciduous, specimens, regularly disposed in formal garden plans or picturesquely grouped or scattered in unconventional arrangements, may serve effectively to delineate the design, to decorate the garden, and to contribute good color. Moreover, the horticultural nature of these showy plants also contributes to their gardenlike character. To use the right plant in the right place is exceedingly important when dealing with plants which must of necessity be more or less conspicuous; and there is but one safe course with respect to individual plants: to use too few, and the less conspicuous kinds, rather than too many.

Groups of plants, by reason of their isolation, receive a degree of prominence, as their circumstances are not unlike those of single plants standing quite alone. Hence, in selecting and arranging plants for groups, one should observe much the same caution that is necessary in the use of individual plants; and if the group is intended for focalization, one should remember that it will have a degree of prominence as a group, quite aside from the conspicuousness of the individual plants of which it is composed.

Groups may be a part of conventionally arranged planting, as well as of unconventional, or so-called "informal," planting about lawns and other areas. The use of groups in unconventional planting schemes will, of course, be more common in small yards,—in such positions as the angles of walks, the corners of grass plots, the termini of vistas, at house corners, and in similar places. In all such groups, it is usually necessary to space the plants at *unequal* intervals, and *not* in rows, but irregularly, although cleverly and purposely, with a view to producing the desired effect. For example, a small group of three plants would usually be arranged on the plan of a triangle with all of its sides unequal. A group may be compact, resulting eventually in all the plants merging to some degree and thus giving the effect of a single plant; or it may be merged below and have the tops of the individual plants distinct, all depending upon the spacing of the plants and on their habits of growth. Again, a group of three plants may be spaced more widely, resulting in two of the plants merging to some degree while the third stands somewhat apart as an individual. Sometimes it is even possible to so arrange the spacing of three or more plants that there is no merging whatever, although the group appearance is preserved. Of course, equal and close spacing tends to produce a mass effect and a more regular one; but the more varied and picturesque effect resulting from an unequal spacing is, in most cases, more suitable. Variety of light and shade and of skyline is possible in small groups only to a limited degree. But in situations where five or more plants may be used, variety of effect may be produced more easily by the use of a greater number of plants in a studied but irregular arrangement.

Usually situations needing small groups do not call for a conspicuous plant feature, but merely for a mass of foliage specific only in quantity and in generally rounded outline. Therefore, small groups at the corners of buildings, at the angles of walks, and in like situations, should, in most cases, consist of but one kind of plant. If a group of three is desired, with the middle plant taller than those on either side, then, as they are planted, a taller one may be selected for this position, or even when the plants are being purchased suitable sizes may be procured for this grouping. As the plants of such groups grow, their relative heights will be maintained. One should realize, however, that in groups and masses, the inside plants tend to grow taller, according as they are crowded, while those on the outside tend to spread and to grow more laterally. Hence, if several plants of the same species and the same size are planted sufficiently close to merge as they grow, equal spacing will tend to result in evenly rounded masses (higher in the center than at the edges), and unequal spacing will tend to produce masses of varied and undulating outlines. Therefore, it is not necessary to employ different kinds of plants to produce groups of somewhat varied forms. However, the proposed forms and outlines may be realized somewhat sooner, if, when the groups are being planted, the plants are carefully selected with respect to their sizes and shapes, and if they are assembled accordingly,—tall ones where height is desired, and low, spreading ones about the edges. By this means, and as a result of the natural tendency in plants of the same species to assume different habits of growth and rates of growth, within a few years groups consisting of but one kind of shrub or tree will display a sufficient variety of foliage and form to prevent monotony. These suggestions apply equally well to shrubs and to trees of all sizes.



Usually it is easier to make interesting groups by using a number of plants rather than a few; and, if the number must be small, perhaps it is easier to work with odd numbers. In large groups and in unconventional ones, the spacing is still according to a studied irregularity, with a view to obtaining the desired variety. Usually, the best appearance of a picturesque treatment requires a variety of height in several places but with no two alike, with the possible exception of the lower plants. Further, a group is more interesting if its highest part is distinctly "off center," and also if the several high places are so arranged as to make for a pleasing, up-and-down outline, or skyline. In this scheme of spacing and skyline, however, it is also necessary to so compose the planting as to obtain the appearance of balance on either side of the highest point. Furthermore, this appearance of balance should be satisfactory from all sides, or at least from all points from which the group may be seen. In such groups, it is also possible to obtain the same effects with plants of but a single species.

Occasionally groups are needed as a means of focalization, as for termini of long walks, and vistas, and for other similar situations. For such purposes it is not always necessary to resort to the sharpest contrasts in order to produce accents of a satisfactory degree, although it is well to know of these possibilities. In a group of three, for example, the strongest accent is made by selecting, for the tallest plant, one of vertical form and habit, and for the other two, rounded forms of distinctly smaller size. All plants may be evergreen, or the rounded forms may be deciduous if the desired shapes can be found, or perhaps made, artificially, by occasional shearing. Larger groups of a similar degree of focalization will result from the use of more of the same elements, but it may be advisable to decrease the ratio of taller plants as the entire number of plants is increased. Only rarely should one venture to use plants of markedly different colors for purposes of focalization. On the contrary, it should be noted that degrees of contrast are more effectually increased or lessened, respectively, by a variation in the ratio of the sizes of the vertical and the horizontal elements.

Groups of considerable prominence may be made by the use of taller elliptical or rounded plants with other rounded plants which are smaller or not so tall. Very pretty groups may be composed entirely of a variety of rounded forms, some of which may be very fine evergreens. In these groups, however, some of the plants should be of free and graceful habit, thus, in an unobtrusive manner, harmonizing the sharply defined evergreen forms with the rest of the group. One should guard against the temptation to use too showy evergreens, however, especially in the yards adjoining simple frame houses. For most planting, the native evergreens, rather than imported or horticultural varieties, and deciduous shrubs are usually more suitable. Many deciduous shrubs are by habit regular and dense, and therefore well fitted for picturesque groups. These, with or without shearing to render them still more perfect, and combined with other deciduous shrubs of a somewhat indefinite habit, will frequently prove decidedly attractive. It should be remembered that all groups receive a certain degree of prominence merely from their isolation.

The use of too great a variety of plants must be avoided if the most interesting groups are to be made. In all the variations between mass effects and picturesque effects,—in fact, in all groups,—one kind of a plant should predominate in quantity, and as a rule this should be the least striking plant. From this it may be

inferred that but a small proportion of conspicuous plants is necessary for a well-balanced group. While it is dangerous to be too specific, let us say, for example, that in a group of three plants it is unwise to use more than two kinds. The same is true for a group of five, and possibly even of six or seven. In groups of three, five, or seven, the accent plants should probably number one, one or two, and two, respectively. It is evident that an increase in the number of conspicuous plants would very likely destroy the balance of the group. However, this use of figures and of exact proportions in examples must not be mistaken for absolute rules, but should be regarded merely as illustrations of the general principles applicable to most cases.

Three varieties may perhaps be combined into a group that includes in all about ten plants, if the accent plants are of but a single kind and if the two other kinds composing the mass of the group are similar. Further, in order to maintain the predominance of one kind of foliage, the two similar varieties should not be used in equal proportions. Rather, the divisions should be made apparently unequal. To insure this unequal division by the time the plants of the group have matured, the fact that one species perhaps grows faster or becomes larger than the other should be noted at the start, and each plant should be accordingly used in quantities which will insure the desired proportion in the ultimate effect. Usually groups larger than those composed of ten plants are necessary to obtain satisfactory effects when more than two varieties are used in a group. However, larger groups, or those so long as to resemble a continuous border, may, under some circumstances, include greater variety of foliage and form. But the principle of employing slight, rather than strong, contrasts, and that of relying upon different forms of similar values of green, rather than upon a variety of colors, to produce contrast in the desired degree, should both be generally applied in the composition of groups. The tendency to use too great a variety of plants should be resisted upon all occasions, and selection should be made in accordance with reason and well-laid plans.

The word *group* implies singleness, or unity, and not a spotty effect of three, five, seven, or any other definite number of individual plants which may be intended to constitute a group. This undesirable appearance is likely to result when the variety of plants used is too great, or when the plants all possess too definite a form or habit of growth. After the plants have matured, the appearance of the group should be that of a whole, —not that of several distinct shrubs or trees. No doubt a rounded, massive group gives the least impression of being composed of separate plants; but even the most picturesque group should have its unlike elements balanced with such nicety as to render its conspicuous plants less evident individually, while at the same time making them contributory to the effectiveness of the entire group. It is even possible, by careful and skilful composition, to space the plants of a group so widely as to entirely prevent their merging, while at the same time producing a satisfactory unified effect. The skill necessary to compose groups of trees or shrubs in accordance with the principles of design, may, in a measure, be natural to some persons, but it is more apt to be the result of study and experience. However, if one will adopt an easy way of doing his planting, and will keep it simple rather than complex, and will work for subdued rather than striking contrasts, he may be reasonably assured of results which are both pleasing and in good taste.



In the making of groups, as well as in all the uses of plants, one must learn to distinguish between contrasts which are harmonious, and those which are absolutely incongruous. Discordant colors, irreconcilable differences between the abnormal habits of freak plants and the natural habits of common plants, and the discrepancy of texture caused by the juxtaposition of plants having very large and those having very small leaves, are all alike incongruities. In many cases, the plant groups seen on lawns have more the appearance of heterogeneous collections than of groups. Furthermore, unity requires that all plants in any one group have one or more similar characteristics. It is comparatively easy to make a selection of plants of different form or habit yet similar in value of green and perhaps similar also in texture. In such a selection, the similarity of color and texture serves to join all the plants into a unified group. A number of similarly rounded plant forms having slightly different tones of green may likewise be selected, and in this case their similarity of form will serve to unify the group. In the use of flowering plants, it is wise to employ but a single color other than white, and to use a preponderance of white as the underlying element. Groups consisting of like plants and tending to result in mass effects are essentially homogeneous. With the introduction of unlike and contrasting elements, however, an intermixture of less-definite, rounded forms and low foliage is necessary, and, while of itself not especially evident, this intermixture serves to unify the group. It is not possible to build scenery by the use of contrasts alone.

Continuous planting along property lines or between the several areas of a yard functions primarily as barriers. The means of enclosure should always be effective, but the borders may also be attractive and in places even decorative. An easy way to plan borders is to begin by thinking of them all as hedges. When their extent has been determined, an examination of the plan will perhaps enable one to select the points where decorative plants may be used to the best advantage.

In order to make detailed plans for the borders, it is necessary to visualize both the existing conditions and the proposed planting as it will grow. One must be able to imagine the appearance of it in order to prepare a ground plan of it, for that is merely a record of one's mental picture and a guide for the actual planting operations. The sides of each area may be studied by standing directly opposite each one and sketching the effects proposed for any part of its borders. A sketch may be made by only two lines, the ground line and the skyline, and in such a sketch the space intervening represents the mass effect of the planting. Any means whereby one can picture more clearly the situation and what he would like to make of it,—a rough sketch, or a more careful drawing of its elevations and so forth,—will be helpful. If one has a good imagination, he may be able to visualize clearly the situation and the desired effects, and so decide upon the plants suitable for his purposes. As a rule the borders should be mere backgrounds, but it may be easier for some to begin by thinking of them as plain hedges, and then to plan for the diversification of the skyline or the face of the border by inserting lower-growing, decorative plants. A general plan or sketch of an entire lot which indicates the location and the outlines of the main features furnishes some suggestions for the detailed plans for the borders, and also, perhaps, for lines of view and points for accent.

Accentuation by means of plants, and degrees of accent have already been mentioned and discussed somewhat abstractly. But one may ask: What relation

have the different plants to the plan for arrangement further than the mere amount of ground space that they occupy? What bearing have scenic effects on the use of a yard? Why may not a pretty effect in plants look as well in one place as in another?

The need of certain planting effects in the front yard has been explained. In the case of gardens, there are few persons who will not understand the need of hedges or walls to make suitable backgrounds for the color of the flowers. They will not, however, be much concerned about the kinds of plants used to enclose such practical features as laundry yards and vegetable gardens. But the lawns, —whether including a greater part of the yard or merely an ample area carefully reserved by the economical allotment of the yard space and desirably enclosed to make them somewhat private for purposes of family recreation,—these, in the popular conception, are but open grass plots surrounded by border planting. Is there no ordering of the scenery of this area by which its attractiveness may be increased?

A lawn is seen more from some points of view than from others. It is seen most from certain windows, porches, or terraces of a house, all approximating the same point of view, and this view of the lawn may be called the prospect from the house. This being the case, the general plan of the lawn should not only make for convenient access to living rooms, porches, and terraces, but in outline and plan it should look its best from this point of view. Even the modeling of the ground and the details of the scenery should be considered and planned primarily from the point of view of the house. This prospect will be more pleasing if the full size of the area can be apparent, or if it can be made to appear even larger than it actually is. For a certainty, any details of its plan which might make it appear smaller should be rejected. If the borders all about the lawn are alike, or are so evenly varied as to produce no particular focalization, then the center of interest will be the approximate center of the area. If a single conspicuous plant, or a prominent group of plants, is situated in the open turf area or in the border planting, one's eye will unconsciously fix upon that point, and one's evaluation of the entire lawn will be largely determined by the attributes of this particular aspect of it. If the interest is situated at the point farthest from the house, the greatest dimensions of the lawn will receive prominence. Therefore, in the plans for most yards, that corner of the lawn which is in view but most remote from the house should be marked by the most conspicuous planting effects. In yards which are very long and narrow, the difference in length between a diagonal and an axis line is not worth considering. Therefore, in order to fix upon a point in the borders for the best view, a study of the situation should be made from points just within or just without the house. The lawn should be presented to the best advantage, and the shape of this area may suggest that the line of view be directly to the rear, to one of the corners, or to the side border. Again, in the case of formal lawns or of those of regular outlines, it may seem best to employ a balanced grouping of conspicuous plants—groups or individuals,—in all corners and about all sides. However, in some formal lawns, and surely in all lawns of informal character, it is more pleasing if the greatest interest is concentrated at one point, whether or not lesser points of interest are made at other places. In most city and suburban lots of rectilinear outline, the house will be parallel to the lot lines and to the lines of division between



the several areas of the yard. Thus the lot will also necessarily be parallel to the axis of the living room. Therefore, from this room and possibly also from other rooms, a point in the far borders which is on the same axis as those rooms will be plainly visible from both within and just outside the house. Similarly, outlooks from porches or terraces toward the side boundary and along a line parallel with the rear face of the house may also be accentuated.

After the position for the most important terminus has been determined, great care should be exercised in fixing upon others. In order to determine the elements necessary for a single good view, or to plan the development of several points of particular interest in the scenery of a yard, one must first understand something about views, and recognize wherein the merits of views consist. Occasionally one finds a view which particularly appeals to him. It may be a scene in the country, or an artificial one arranged on the grounds of some residence. If one tries to reproduce a prearranged effect in his own yard, he may find helpful, though perhaps abstract, suggestions in an analysis of good examples, or even of pictures, of landscapes.

When an artist sees a view which he wishes to reproduce, he is impressed primarily by some particular object or by some definite aspect of it. He takes little or no note of all the accompanying details, even though these may be sufficiently apparent to be evident at some distance. And, if one stops to think of it, this is precisely the way in which everyone sees a view. We never see all its component parts, but only the plainly visible things and the objects which happen to appeal to us. If an artist attempted to reproduce all the details, he would find it impossible to do so. Therefore, he expresses in detail only what seems important to him, and only suggests, in an indefinite way, what to him appears of secondary interest. In this way, the principal object of interest is thrown into prominence. The objects of lesser interest are so presented and arranged as to balance the interest that focuses on the center of the picture. Of all the space included within the frame of a picture, those things of which one really takes note occupy but a comparatively small proportion. The indefinite surrounding part of a picture not only furnishes an harmonious setting for the subject, but serves as an insulating band, or zone, between the picture as a whole and the wall and other nearby objects.

In pictures, the interest is centered in the foreground, in the middle ground, or in the distance; and if the chief point of interest is in the distance, the foreground and the middle-ground details are not emphasized. In a yard there is usually opportunity to use a porch, a summerhouse, or a garden seat as a nearby object of interest. In this case, one is, in reality, dealing with a foreground picture. A decorative effect in a far corner of a lawn becomes the terminus of a view, and the appropriate neutral foreground to such a view is the lawn.

Wherever the interest is to be centered, all that is in front of it, behind it, or on either side of it should be inconspicuous. If one plans to develop a diagonal line of view from the house toward a far corner of the lawn, there should be nothing striking or distracting in the borders or within one's field of vision on either side. In order to make good views, a generous amount of indefinite foliage must be provided about the centers of interest, wherever these may be located. Therefore particularly interesting single plants or groups of plants should be placed far

enough apart to insure their being seen separately and to the best advantage against an ample background.

Naturally, it is desirable to have some reciprocity of views about the entire area of the private grounds. Not only from the house to the lawns or gardens, but also from the lawns back to the house, and particularly about the steps marking the access to the lawn, should the vista be pleasing. If there is a summer-house or paved area for chairs out in the garden, an interesting glimpse of the lawn should be provided therefrom. Thus, in order to organize these lines of view, it is well to indicate them on the general plan by means of lines and especially to mark their termini with arrows. The lines of view may intersect, but usually the termini may be kept well apart and even entirely segregated. This may be accomplished by a clever manipulation of the curves in the border outline, or at times by the use of outstanding individuals or grouped shrubs. Frequently the same point may serve as a focus for more than one view, or the plants which from one point of view are a part of one composition may be made to combine effectively also with those seen primarily from another viewpoint. From any place about the house, in the gardens, or on the lawns where one is likely to sit down or loiter, and thus to take particular notice of that which is about him, the scenery should be of special interest. The planting of the yard should be devised with this in mind. However, in any one direction, but one picture should appear. While each bit of artificial scenery should be somewhat different, it should not be markedly unlike the rest. The planting schemes of a yard need not be intricate to be attractive; and whether or not there are many studied views, a yard will always be more interesting, if from one point of view, there is a vista which is unquestionably more attractive than any of the rest. A view across the longest stretch of greensward is the most characteristic of lawn scenery and is usually the most impressive.

Detailed methods of planning pictures in the borders involve many of the suggestions already given in the discussion of plant characteristics and in the explanations of the kinds and degrees of accent produced by individual plants and by combinations of plants. In mass planting, however, the characteristics which are most evident are those which are seen silhouetted against the sky,—in other words, that part of any plant which rises above the tops of the flanking masses. The suggestion for studying these border effects in outline has already been made. Perhaps by now it is evident that if, between focuses, the skyline of the border follows an undulating and somewhat indefinite line, and that if, at these focuses, the skyline rises in rounded, columnar, conical, or pointed forms, then, the forms employed, together with their degrees of definiteness, their size, their difference in height and their contrasting characteristics in varied combinations will determine the degree of accent they produce in the silhouette of the border. On the contrary, any marked depression in the skyline of a border will also produce an accent, especially if beyond it the adjoining area is comparatively open. Larger openings in the borders, for the enjoyment of distant views, should be flanked by indefinite foliage, preferably that of trees. In small yards it is undesirable thus to open the borders on the lines of the longest views from the interior, as, by comparison with the distance, these views are thereby made to appear shorter, and the apparent size of the yard is also reduced.



Decorative effects in the borders may be made without any variation of their skylines. Low-growing but distinctive individual plants or groups of plants, or the color of flowering or fruiting vegetation, may be used in many ways to effect a focalization of the desired character and degree. Of course, if transient effects, such as flowers, are used, then plants which flower at other seasons, or which have color in the autumn, must be included, or some other means must be devised by which the desired effects can be sustained throughout the year. In the use of contrasts between plants of definite form or habit, one must consider also the contrast of his proposed group in relation to that of its background, which may be a wall, a hedge, or a free-growing border. If color is used as an accent, it should be kept below the skyline. With the variety of plants that is available, very strong focalization can be made in the face of a border. If such conspicuous groups or combinations rise above the prevailing line of the borders, then the effect is thereby increased if not actually doubled.

Some persons delight in studying the seasonal effects in color. These will find it possible to employ color for all the accents; to express thereby the desired degree of focalization at each terminus; and to select and to combine plants so as to sustain a scheme of color accent during the entire growing season. In winter, however, such planting is likely to be uninteresting, and it is then that we especially appreciate any attractiveness that may be possible in the plantations. Hence it is well to combine with color plants some permanent effects in woody plants, particularly in evergreens. Especially should one endeavor to select, for both accentuation and background, those shrubs and trees whose growth habits are sufficiently dense to avoid a thin and scraggly appearance in the winter. While all plants do not adjust themselves to shearing, most of them may be made to grow more densely either by moderate shearing or by pruning the "leaders." Pinching off the leaders forces the lateral branches, and in some cases also develops more branches. However, this process does not necessarily materially affect the free-growing habit or the general appearance of the plant, except that it encourages compactness and restrains growth. Evergreens, especially the hemlock, are always desirable in the borders. At times the Douglas fir and some of the pines may also be suitable. As backgrounds for color, these evergreens are most desirable, and in the winter they are always appreciated. A varied skyline may be developed from them, either by planting different sizes at the start or by topping and otherwise shaping them.

The most pleasing borders for lawns, even if somewhat small, must include some trees. A border consisting entirely of shrubs is very monotonous indeed. Trees in the borders require somewhat more space than do shrubs, but they are well worth the additional ground space. Those species of trees should be selected which branch to the ground and thus, within a reasonable time, will of themselves make a solid wall of foliage. Very few trees and shrubs do well growing close together, but in order to combine them successfully it is only necessary to be forewarned of the difficulty, and to proceed advisedly and carefully. Plants which naturally grow in the shade always do better in close proximity than do those requiring the full sunlight, and of course most plants are of the sun-loving type. Rapid-growing trees are likely to have many roots, and thus will starve out less robust plants whose roots are competing in the same soil.

If the trees overtop them, the nearby plants are likewise less able to compete for existence. Deeper soil in the beds is of course one remedy, but a careful selection of the plants to be combined is a better course and promises greater success. Trees which are intended to overtop shrubs should have but a thin canopy of foliage and thus cast little or no shade. Shrubs requiring full sunlight should not be planted so close to trees that the trees, when mature, will shade them. There are, however, several native shrubs and small trees which thrive under heavy shading and mingle their branches and foliage with those of the adjacent trees without giving any effect of crowding. Among these the witch-hazel is best, though the viburnums and cornuses also do fairly well. Most trees look best if they are clothed from the ground up with their own foliage, and used in this fashion they interrupt the monotony of the shrubs more effectively. Shrubs may be temporarily planted about trees for the better appearance of a newly planted border, but if this is done, they should be taken out before they crowd the lower branches of the trees.

Trees are essential in a border, as both their foliage and their forms as a whole contribute to produce an expression of larger scale and a better quality of background. Therefore, in some manner, provision should be made for them. With little difficulty, and with even less care than would be necessary for shrubs occupying the same space, trees may be trained to grow more laterally along the line of the border, rather than forward over the lawn. The leaders of branches may be pruned at any distance from the trunk of the tree. This may even be done occasionally to all branches on one or more sides of the tree and without noticeably changing its appearance, if the pruning is done in a somewhat even manner. Trees planted within a few feet of a boundary fence will, of course, spread over the fence; but neighbors seldom object to this. If a street adjoins, it is possible to make the border trees serve also as street trees, or at least to so space them that they shall not interfere with other street trees. Street trees may be selected to combine as they grow with the plants within the yard. But whether trees compose a majority of the border material or only a few are included in the borders their effect should not be entirely omitted. If the largest trees cannot be used, then smaller-growing kinds should be selected.

A brief description of the various kinds of border planting should call attention to the possibilities and the advantages of hedges. In the popular conception, hedges are from two to four feet high, are usually scraggly and thin at the base, and are ordinarily composed of barberry or privet. As a matter of fact, hedges may be grown to almost any desired height or width, according to the choice made for them of trees or shrubs, and according to the spacing and trimming they receive. Many small city yards may appropriately be enclosed by hedges of tall-growing shrubs or small trees, in order to save space. An inexpensive, woven-wire fence on the outside, through which the hedge will grow, will soon be hidden, but remains to protect the hedge at the base and to make a more effective barrier. The plants may be set in single, double, or triple rows, or in as many rows as are required, in accordance with the habits of the plants used, to produce the desired width. A row of taller-growing plants may be planted in the center with rows of lower-growing and more spreading plants on either side. Similar or different kinds of plants, as are thought suitable, may likewise be used. A hedge may be trimmed to a square, a rectangular, a truncated, or a rounded section, or it may even be



allowed to grow with little or no trimming. If a hedge about an entire area seems monotonous, one may arrange single plants or groups in some or all of the corners. In areas not large enough to afford space for a continuous informal border, masses may be employed in the corners, and on the sides hedges may be used to connect them. Most persons realize the value of hedges in gardens; but few recognize that they are very economical borders for small areas. Thus, considering their uses and the varied effects which may be obtained with them, this method of planting is worthy of observation and study.

While it is scarcely possible, by means of written descriptions, to teach persons to select and to arrange plants successfully, a few suggestions can be given which may encourage closer observation. First of all, a few things about each plant must be known or ascertained before any kind can be selected for particular uses or definite positions and before it can be so spaced into or combined with a group, a hedge, or a larger plantation, as to produce certain preconceived effects in accordance with a rearranged plan. If, because of its form or habit, one has selected a certain plant for a specific position in the plan of a yard, he must know whether, in that position, it will receive enough sunlight, whether the proposed position will be too cold and exposed or too dry for it, and whether the eventual spread of its branches will necessitate some allowance in order to space it properly. Most plants thrive under normal conditions, and with a more detailed knowledge of these, and, in fact, of all plants, better success may be attained. The space required by a plant may be ascertained by observing the habits and spread of mature plants of the same kind; one may also consult a nurseryman. According to these data, plants may be so spaced as to merge closely, or slightly, or to have any required distance between them at maturity.

In preparing a plan for border planting, or in staking out on the ground the positions for the plants, it is best to arrange first the distinctive, individual plants and groups which are to mark the focal points in the border. Then the less-conspicuous plants which are to connect the focal points and to fill in the intervening spaces in the border may be planned. The spacing of groups which are a part of the borders should be done very carefully, and in a similar manner to that described for outstanding groups on the lawn. If the trees or shrubs intended to be prominent are low-growing, they should be set forward, and the group should be brought to the edge of the border; on the other hand, if they are tall-growing and are intended to rise from the mass about them, they should be placed further toward the back, and the indefinite mass planting of the border should be continued across in front of them. Deciduous plants, especially those of a spreading habit, should not be used in conjunction with evergreens, as they crowd the evergreens, shade and kill their lower branches, and in the winter have a very shabby appearance. Evergreens and deciduous trees which are intended to "face" themselves (to have no shrubs in front of them) should be placed near the front of the border, or within such a distance of it that the branches will eventually spread and join it. Generally speaking, the trees and the larger shrubs which are to be incorporated therein should be placed nearer the front or the back of the border, rather than midway between its edges. In a mixture of evergreens and deciduous plants, only those deciduous varieties should be selected which will not spread unduly. If they are intended to merge with the evergreens, however,

only those deciduous plants which are sufficiently dense to have in winter an appearance similar to that in summer should be chosen.

While planning or staking out the plants, one should constantly bear in mind the spread of each plant at its maturity, and the immediate appearance of a plantation should always be sacrificed for its future effect. Plantations made for immediate effect will require annual thinning or replanting to some extent for at least ten years. On the other hand, if one wishes to save expense, and can afford to wait three or four years for reasonably good appearances, then with plants spaced upon the basis of a permanent plan, he will be surprised to find what a small number are actually required to plant his yard effectively. Of course, each kind of plant requires a different spacing, and shrubs spread and grow to a satisfactory degree of maturity faster than do trees. But all the plants of a border will do best, and in the end make a better looking border, if so spaced as to barely merge when their ultimate lateral growth is attained.

Trees mature more slowly than do shrubs. Furthermore, they make very little lateral growth until their rapid upward growth is completed. For example, an American elm twenty-five feet high rarely has a spread of more than ten feet in diameter, but of course this tree grows very rapidly, and, as it is not very dense, and also eventually spreads widely, it is not good for borders in small yards. The English beech is slow growing, but it spreads laterally when but a young tree and with but little training may be restrained from spreading unduly over the lawn. The American beech is a taller tree than the English variety, and not so dense. Both these trees are very good for use in a border, especially because they will thrive under somewhat shaded and crowded conditions. In these respects hemlocks are also well qualified, but it is well to keep spreading and strong-growing shrubs and trees from crowding them too closely. However, as tall trees grow more slowly than shrubs, it is customary to fill in about them with shrubs for temporary appearance. In this case the trees should be carefully located with respect to their future growth, and the outline of the border should be delineated as intended for its future development. Then the space intervening, and, in fact, all the area about the tree, should be filled in with the temporary shrubs. One must be sure to pull out all these shrubs before they crowd the tree or the other permanent plants, and if this is likely to be neglected, the temporary plants had better not be used.

When the distinctive groups and individual trees and shrubs have been located and staked about the lawn, the general outline of the border may next be determined at the more important points. The entire outline of the borders should in general be a reasonable one: it should be consistent with the size of the area; it should be suggested by the form of the area and in relation to the adjoining areas; it should be adapted to the focal points and to the lines of view. The outline should also be smoothly curved, and should define not an angular but a pleasing form. The curves should not all be similar; some of them should be larger and some smaller, with the smaller curves not so narrowly and deeply indented as to be eventually obliterated by the future growth of the plants. Usually it is easier to work out the first general scheme for planting on the plan of the entire yard, or on a tracing thereof, as by this means one can get a conception of the entire yard at a glance. If planning on paper proves difficult, one may, after determining the main points and outlines, turn to the yard itself, and work



out the details with its actual conditions about him. One way to study the general spacing of the plants on the ground is to represent the various kinds by stakes of different colors, or of distinctly different lengths, or otherwise differentiated. The effects of the different kinds of plants in the various positions may thus be clearly visualized. Some means should be adopted whereby one can study his planting at leisure and can visualize its relation to the other plants already growing on and about the yard. When all has been most carefully studied and checked, the holes may be dug and the plants set without the necessity of resetting, loss of time, and perhaps injury to the plants themselves.

The planting scheme for a yard should also be studied in some of its general aspects. Perhaps when the detailed plans for planting in the several areas have been prepared, the entire plans should be reviewed and checked and possibly slightly revised, before final decisions are made. This will further assure the production of the most pleasing entire effect. For example, within any one area all the plants should be arranged in a somewhat balanced manner. One side of a lawn should not be planted with but one combination of plants while the planting along its other sides is made up entirely of other kinds of vegetation. Were the planting correctly done, some of the kinds occurring in larger masses on one side would also be used in one or two smaller masses on the other side. Plants in any degree conspicuous should be balanced,—unsymmetrically of course,—on all view lines. This arrangement will make them fit well into the composition of the whole, and will produce the desired focalization at the termini. Each of the several areas should be so planted as to contribute to the interior scenery and to the effects suitable for that area and in pleasing contrast with the other areas. Nevertheless, the plants selected for the various parts of a yard should not produce effects so radically different as to seem to be parts of different properties. Some plants of the same kind should be used in varying degrees in all of the areas, and the remainder of the plants of the same scheme should also be somewhat similar.

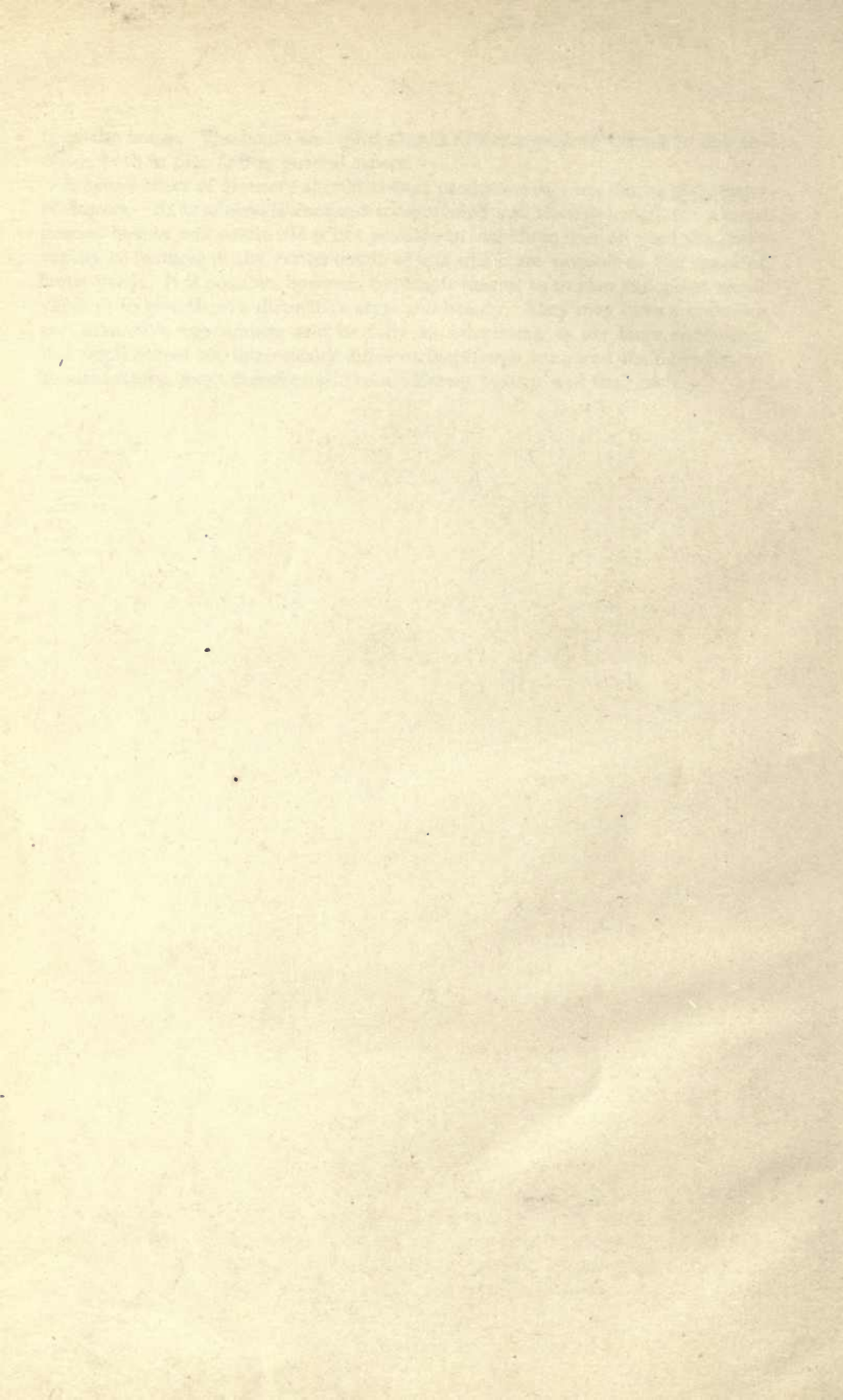
The appearance of a yard will be determined, to a large extent, by the vegetation employed and by the skill with which it is arranged, assuming, of course, that all has been based upon a carefully planned arrangement. Small yards should, if possible, be decorated with some architectural features which are also apparently useful. While expensive at the start, they are permanent features and also contribute in the summer to the pleasureable life in the yard and are interesting to look at in the winter. But the planting is likely to be the dominant element in the yard, and the general effects are the most noticeable and the most important. At the very beginning, then, one should be careful to think in terms of plants which will in the end be suitable for a particular house and for a particular situation. He should determine the approximate quantity of evergreens necessary to make a setting that is in character with the house under consideration, and he should decide upon the amount of care he can give the plants in the yard, especially if herbaceous plants are to be included. Thus in a general way the proportions of evergreen, deciduous, and garden plants, or any others materially affecting the final appearance or the cost of upkeep, should be determined. Starting with a correct estimate of the essentials of the planting and of all requirements called for by the general scheme and with an understanding of what is suitable, one should carefully adhere both to his premise and to the intelligent application of planning principles. The planting in a yard should not look more pretentious

than the house. The house and yard should rather appear to belong to one another, both in plan and in general aspect.

A broad effect of greenery should always predominate, even during the season of flowers. If the scheme is confined to simplified and uncomplex effects, a more general beauty will result. It is not possible to include in a small yard the great variety of features or the varied scenic effects which are possible in the space of larger yards. It is possible, however, by simple means, to so plan and plant small yards as to give them a distinctive style and beauty. They may have a homelike and attractive appearance, and be fully as interesting as are large residences. But small homes are intrinsically different from large ones, and their beauty, to be satisfactory, must therefore also be a different beauty, and their own.











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